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A PREFACE TO THE READER.*

How unfit I am to perform even this common and usual office of introducing thee to the entertainment which the following discourses will afford, the knowledge which I ought to have of myself is sufficient to convince me; for it cannot be expected that I should give a due character of the author, which hath been already drawn by a more excellent hand,† and which for me to attempt, as it would not be comely, so it is above my undertaking. It would as ill suit with my disability, who am inconsiderable and so little known, to offer my mean judgment needlessly to recommend any of his writings to the world. All that is proper and agreeable for me to do is to assure thee that these which I have had the care of publishing are the genuine issue of his thoughts,—most of them the mature fruits of the later years of his life,—and to give some short account of their order and general design.

I have here offered to public view, in a second volume of his works, several discourses upon great and important truths; that what were his own retired and profitable meditations may, by the divine blessing, become a common benefit.

The first which presents itself is *An Exposition on the Revelation;* a portion of Scripture so abstruse, that though it has exercised the thoughts and studies of many worthy divines, may yet, in some respects, be called 'a sealed book;' which will be more perfectly explained when he who alone is found worthy to open it, the holy Lamb of God, shall come to unfold all its difficult passages in their glorious accomplishment. As the author lived and rejoiced in this hope, he has here in this his comment pointed to the foundation upon which he grounded it, even 'a sure word of prophecy.' But as he was fully ascertained that God would in his own time make good his word, he was not over-curious in dating the day of his performance. You will find him modest in this point; he himself determines nothing, but ex-

* This preface, by Goodwin's son, prefixed to the second volume of the folio works, is inserted here, although but a small part of it refers to the treatises contained in this volume.—Ed.

† Mr Thankful Owen, in his Preface to the 'Exposition upon the Epistle to the Ephesians.' [Given in this Edition, vol. i, p. xxxix.—Ed.]

presses the opinions of others rather than his own, though he indeed illustrates them with reasons which might make them look probable; and though they have proved to be mistaken in their calculations, yet many things occur in drawing them up which are not altogether unworthy of being remarked. Their account indeed is now superannuated, yet it was proper enough for the author to mention it at the time of his writing this discourse, which was in the year 1639. It seems to be the divine prerogative to know the times and the seasons; and as he always chooseth the fittest, he reserves to himself the exact knowledge of his own appointed day.

That which comes next in order of these treatises is, *A Discourse of the Knowledge of God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ;* which I have placed the first of these theological tracts, (and of others that are to follow, if Providence permits me an opportunity of publishing them, which insist upon other the chiefest heads of divine knowledge,) because it is the design of the first rudiments of religion to instruct us what due apprehensions we ought to have of the Deity. As our Saviour tells us, 'that this is life eternal, to know God the Father, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent,' so it is the firm foundation whereon the beautiful and uniform structure of all other truths is built; and sad experience in all ages hath made us understand into what wild imaginations, as to the other parts of our Christian religion, those unhappy men have wandered, (as the Arians in the primitive times, and the Socinians in our own,) who have stumbled, and so made a false step in their entrance at this first and principal truth. The author, who considered the irremediable mischiefs of the least error in these first articles of faith, and saw the proneness in men to mistake, has made it his chief design, in all the parts of this discourse, to direct our thoughts to due conceptions of the divine nature, of the Trinity, and the person of Christ. And as his assertions herein are no other than according to those measures the word of God has prescribed, he has fetched his proofs from the same magazine; and the evidence of his arguments is the more convincing, since it proceeds from that light which he beats out by comparing places of Scripture together. If any should judge some of his notions to be too fine, and condemn his thoughts for taking too high a flight, and leaping over the common bounds of knowledge; this may be pleaded in defence, that he has at least asserted nothing that contradicts a received truth, or which by any consequence may weaken the foundations of religion. Nay, he asserts nothing but what divine authority in Scripture does countenance; he proves all by plain texts, and by an easy, unforced explication, without racking or torturing them to make them speak his own mind. He is the vender of no new opinions, since what he delivers he clearly evinces to be the sense of the eternal oracles of truth. Nor is he too boldly curious, since he is not wise beyond what is written; and the inquisitiveness of his mind should not be prejudged, when his inquiries have proceeded according to the conduct of an infallible guide. And if they have gone further than others, it is only because, having seen the glimpse of a truth, he could not leave it till he had pursued it down through the most intimate recesses of Scripture. It is certainly allowable to

dig deeper in those mines which are inexhaustible, and where those who come after the diligence of others may still find new and far richer treasures. Our spiritual knowledge surely is capable of increase, and further degrees may be yet added to it; for even after those glorious times wherein God has promised to bless his people with larger effusions of his Spirit, who shall lead them into all truth, they yet will then know but in part: and indeed all the successive ages of the world put together afford too short a time for us perfectly to search into the deep things of God, since eternity itself will give us but space enough to know and admire them.

The discourse which follows is, *Of the Creatures, and the Condition of their State by Creation;* which I have placed before that of *Election*, because though indeed the electing decree externally preceded the framing of this world, yet God made his choice out of the creatures which he determined to make, and considered them in the state wherein they were placed by creation. And the author, when he evinces the necessity of an election-grace to save certainly and infallibly any of either angels or men, draws his most cogent proof from the mutability of the creature, which absolutely required a supernatural grace to secure its establishment. And he therein refers the reader to this discourse, wherein he proves that the creature, as such, was changeable and uncertain in the best circumstances of its condition, and had a very unfixed station when it stood, and flourished in all the glory of its innocence. It is therefore requisite for the intelligent reader, if he would understand the force of the argument, to peruse what is discoursed in this treatise concerning the weak and unstable condition of the creatures, which renders the grace of election indispensably necessary unto their salvation. And as the author had it in his eye and heart, not only to prove the absolute need we have of this grace, but also to celebrate unto the height its glory and praise, in prosecution of this design he compares all the advantages which Adam, as an innocent creature, by nature possessed, with all those signal mercies which belong to that condition whereunto grace advances the elect since the fall, and endeavours to convince us how vastly those blessings we receive from Christ, the second Adam, excel all the benefits which the Creator's bounty bestowed upon the first; how grace instates us in a higher happiness than we should have enjoyed, though we had lived with our first father in innocence; how grace makes us gainers by the loss of all paradise's pleasures, though we are apt to envy and regret that we have lost them; and how the state of the meanest soul that belongs to Christ, who is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him, is infinitely preferable to Adam's primitive condition, with all its enjoyments. Thus in this discourse he prepares the mind of the reader to admire and adore the riches of that grace, which further to evince and illustrate is the whole design of that which follows in the last place of this volume.

The last discourse, then, is *Of Election*, which to so many is a hard saying, a stumblingblock, and a stone of offence. He discourses this high truth with such a wary exactness, that its greatest opposers will not find anything in what he asserts whereon to fasten those invidious reflections, those harsh

and horrid consequences with which they use to deform this doctrine, to make it look affrighting. He is very tender in the point of reprobation, and expresses himself no otherwise concerning it than the Scriptures themselves do: viz., that there are some of mankind whom God has left out of the compass of his gracious decrees, as indeed he was not obliged to share equal favour to all; that these are the rest, or remainder, Rom. xi. 7, when God has chosen out the others; that these he resigns to the conduct of their free-will, and leaves them to go on in their own ways, Acts xiv. 16, and to reap at last the bitter fruits of their evil actions. After he has proved the necessity of such a grace as is derived from the decree of election to assure the salvation of both angels and men, and that all whom God hath rescued from the misery and ruin of the fall were really saved by this grace, he proceeds to illustrate the infinite greatness of it by many considerations: as, that it appoints, and certainly brings us to a higher glory and blessedness than was the design of creation to confer on the creature, though they had continued in innocence; and that it commends itself by a discriminating love, which makes a difference between the elect and the other of mankind. He then discourses how infallibly God's decrees of election obtained their designed issue, and proves largely how an effectual invincible grace does certainly accomplish what the decree and counsel of God's will had determined. These were the truths which exercised the thoughts and heart of the author, the element in which he lived, the air in which his soul breathed, and by which a spiritual life was constantly maintained in it. And as he experienced that they afforded him comfort and support against all his temptations and trials, he committed them to writing, that others might receive from them the same solace and refreshing help as he did.

It renders his loss the more supportable, that he has left behind him, now that he is retired out of sight, what may perpetuate a grateful remembrance of him among men; that though God hath withdrawn him to heaven, he may yet be useful to His church here on earth; that his service is not ended with his life, nor buried with him in the dust; and 'though he rests from all his labours, yet the fruits of them may follow him,' even after he is gone hence to receive their reward. He lives again in this offspring of his better part, his mind; and 'being dead, he yet speaks' in them the same truths, which when living were the most delightful entertainment of his thoughts.

But I forget that I assume too much to myself, in delivering my own thus freely, in things which are indeed so much above me; and I know not how a zealous affection for the memory of a father's name, whom I cannot but love and honour in the grave, hath carried me beyond the bounds of that reservedness and modesty which would perhaps have far better become

THO. GOODWIN.

AN

EXPOSITION OF THE REVELATION.

AN

EXPOSITION OF THE REVELATION.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

The design of the Book of the Revelation.—That it is a prophecy, wherein, as in a vision, the story of all times is represented.—The prophetical part of it begins at the 4th chapter.—An exposition of the 4th chapter.—The vision of the throne, beasts, and elders.—A representation of the church in all ages.

THE three first chapters contain seven epistles to seven particular churches; but from this 4th chapter to the end of the book, is laid down a more general prophecy, from John's time to the world's end. There is therefore this character of difference put between that part of this book in those three first chapters, and this that begins here: that *that* concerned things that then were past, things that then were, and things to come hereafter, as chap. i. 19; whereas *this* delivers those things only which 'must be hereafter,' chap. iv. 1.

In this prophecy, as in a vision, is the story of all times acted and represented. A comedy is the representing of a story past, by men; this a prophetical vision of things to come, acted by angels answerably. As in such interludes and shows there is first a stage built, a scene or place supposed where the things were done, and a chorus or company of spectators sitting on the stage continually, and giving their judgment and approbation, which was the custom in comedies of old; so in this chapter the Apostle hath the vision of the scene, theatre, or stage, namely the church of Christ, in a general view throughout all ages, presented; the members whereof are the chorus, who upon any great or solemn occasion give their *plaudite* or acclamation of glory unto God. So the four beasts, and four-and-twenty elders, you may in this book often observe to do. And then, as in such shows and representations there used to be a prologue, so, chap. v., you have as artificial a prologue acted as in any poem; from whence, chap. vi., the representation of the story of things begins.

Chap. iv. 1.—John is called up from the earth into the air, (by which heaven is here meant, as often elsewhere it is,) the place of John's vision;

and in the air a door seemed to open, in at which he entering, sees the sights following.

Ver. 2, *And immediately I was in the Spirit.*—The phrase, *in the Spirit*, is like to that when we say a man is *in love*, or a mill is said to be *in the wind;* as noting out such a repletion or filling with the Spirit, as possessed and took up all the powers of his soul to attend this vision. It filled all, it carried all in him unto the thing in hand, and wholly acted his faculties by a supernatural motion of the Spirit, so that his understanding and senses acted not in their natural way, but as moved by the Spirit. Now this his being in the Spirit was extraordinary, and to an extraordinary purpose; even to see these visions, and by the Holy Ghost to write them: yet to us it should be ordinary, so far as, in our ordinary course, to walk in the Spirit, and be in the Spirit; that is, to give up ourselves, our powers and faculties, to the Spirit's rule and guidance, so that he should move all wheels in us.

Obs.—Now from this *immediately* observe, That a believing soul may presently be in the Spirit; he soon and suddenly comes upon a man.

The vision that follows is of the church, which is made the scene of all things prophesied of in this book; for all things done are either for it or concerning it. And though passages of judgments on the world are recorded, yet for the church's sake they are recorded, and are done as by God out of the church. Now this vision of the throne, beasts, and elders is a representation of the church (wherein God hath his throne) of men on earth, universal in all ages; set forth according to the form or pattern of institution of a church, into which all saints on earth should be moulded. To prove this in the several parts of it:—

I. It is *a representation of the church;* for—

1. In the church only is God worshipped; as here, ver. 8–10. In the church only is God known; and there 'they speak of his glory,' Ps. xxix. 9.

2. The throne here is evidently God's seat in his temple the church; so chap. xvi. 17, 'A voice came from the temple, from the throne,' &c.

3. Accordingly, the allusion in this vision is to Solomon's temple, and to the tabernacle, which were the types of the church to come under the new testament. Therefore God here sits on a throne, as he did then in the holy of holies; and there are seven golden lamps here, as there the candlestick; and a sea of glass here to wash in, as there was there one of brass: all ornaments and utensils of that temple typifying forth ours.

II. It is the representation of a church *of men*, not angels; for—

1. These elders and beasts sing that they 'are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;' which the angels were not, chap. v. 9. And—

2. Ver. 11, the angels are reckoned distinct from these elders and beasts, and are said to be 'about them;' as also chap. vii. 11.

III. It is of the church of men *on earth;* for—

1. The allusion is to the marshalling of the church of the Jews about the tabernacle; as shall be shewn.

2. Here are seven spirits; that is, variety of the gifts of the Spirit, which in heaven do cease.

3. Here is a sea of glass, for the priests and worshippers to wash in; which supposeth a remainder of defilement, at least of the feet; as John xiii. 10.

4. The distinction of beasts and elders in this company,—namely, officers and brethren,—which in heaven ceaseth, argueth it also.

IV. Of the church *universal.*

1. In all *ages;* therefore placed at the beginning here, and often brought *in in this prophecy* as spectators.

2. In all *places;* so chap. v. 9, 'redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, and nation.'

V. This church universal, represented whilst on earth as cast into the *pattern of a church*, instituted according to the rules of the word, the measure to square churches on earth by; and though in all ages they kept not that pattern,—therefore, chap. xi. 1, John is bidden to measure the temple of that age, as having swerved from the original form too far in Antichrist's apostasy,—yet such a pattern is given forth here as the only true pattern, into which all should be cast; and God sets forth his church as it should be in all ages, and as it was in John's time. All saints, in all ages, should be cast into such companies. So that here is the church with her appurtenances.

The church consisting of three states—1. Christ the head; 2. The four beasts, the officers; 3. The twenty-four elders, who are the brethren—

There are the appurtenances also: as the seven lamps, which are the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and the laver, which is Christ's blood, to wash in, &c.

First, Ver. 2, 3, *I saw a throne*—which is an allusion to the holy of holies in the temple, where God did sit. Therefore, Isa. vi. 1, when the Lord was presented sitting upon his throne, it is said, 'the residue of his train filled the temple;' that is, those other parts of the temple, the throne being the holy of holies. Therefore, Ezek. xliii., when the glory of God returned to the temple, ver. 4, 5, God calls it, ver. 7, 'the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.' The like you have, Jer. xvii. 12, which throne is here in the midst of the four-and-twenty elders and the beasts; signifying, as himself interprets it, Ezek. xliii., his dwelling in the midst of his church, according to that saying of Christ, 'I will be in the midst among you.'

Obs.—To set up a church is to set up God and Christ a throne. A church is his only visible throne on earth, till the kingdoms of the world become his visibly.

Now, secondly, for him who sitteth on the throne: Mr Brightman would have God in the Trinity, or the three Persons, set forth in those three colours mentioned. But to make the rainbow which encompasseth the throne to be the Holy Ghost, whenas that rainbow is presented as divided and distinct from him who sitteth on the throne, is *nimis durum*, it is too much. I take it, it is God in Christ, in whom he is reconciled unto his church, and by whom he rules it; chap. iii. 15, and chap. xii., it is called the throne of God. And Ezek. i. 26, in which chapter the same kind of vision is represented, he who sits on the throne there is the 'Son of man;' as also in Isa. vi. 1, which place Christ in John xii. interprets of himself. So that God, considered as in Christ, is he that sitteth on the throne. And, chap. vii. 10, he that sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb, are made distinct, yet mentioned together.

Ver. 3.—For 'the rainbow that was round about the throne,' it notes out the memorial of his covenant of grace; that as the rainbow was the sign of the covenant of nature, to put God and us in mind he would not destroy the world any more by water, so this rainbow is to God a memorial of his covenant of grace to his church: 'This is to me as the waters of Noah; for as I have sworn that the waters should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn not to be wroth with thee,' saith God, in Isa. liv. 9. Which covenant is round about his throne, so to put him in mind, in all his dispensations towards his church, to 'remember his covenant;' that let him go forth any way in his dispensations towards his church, he may still be minded of mercy; and his church again, *in all their* intercourses with God, and all dis-

pensations from God, and occasions coming to him, may be put in mind of mercy also, and his covenant of grace, to trust in it; and that the prayers of the church may still pass from them through the rainbow, as all God's dispensations to the church do come through the said rainbow also.

Now for the situation of the church. Both elders and beasts are *about the throne*, ver. 4, 6, 7. It is formed after the enquartering of the people of Israel about the tabernacle in the wilderness, Num. ii. The Levites were next to the tabernacle, and the tribes about the Levites. So here, the beasts (the officers) were, as in ver. 6, in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne; that is, as Beza interprets it, their station is between the throne and these elders, who did surround the throne about the four beasts. The phrase, *in the midst*, in Scripture being put for *between*, or *among;* so Gen. xxiii. 6. The beasts, though nearest the throne, yet are mentioned after the elders; for though their place be nearer, yet they are but the church's servants, and the radical power is in the church, here signified by the twenty-four elders.

Ver. 4.—To begin with the elders, who, as was said, do signify the church:—

First, They are called elders, (1.) because the church under the new testament is grown up to an elderly age, in opposition to the church under the old testament, who are termed 'children under age,' Gal. iv. 1–3, &c. As also, (2.) for that gravity that should be in all church assemblies, and in their proceedings and administrations.

Secondly, For their number. They are twenty-four, in allusion to the twenty-four heads of those orders of Levites who were porters and singers, established by David in the temple, 1 Chron. xxiv., xxv., and xxxi. 25, 26. And this, to shew the increase of the church under the new testament, in comparison of that under the old, whereof that proportion made by David was a type. The heads of the twelve tribes then were multiplied to twenty-four. Now in like manner Solomon's temple had a double proportion to that of the tabernacle of Moses; that also being an after-type of the church's increase under the gospel.

Thirdly, They are 'clothed in white raiment,' signifying that they are priests, Exod. xxviii. 40.

Fourthly, They had 'on their heads crowns of gold,' to shew their kingly power, and that it belongs to them to judge matters in the church; as, 1 Cor. v. 12, 'Do not you judge them that are within?'

Fifthly, They were 'round about the throne.' The meanest saint is as near and dear to God as the greatest. Therefore the word in Cant. i. 12 is 'a round table,' which the saints sit at with Christ; it shews also their equality. And Christ is in the midst here, and will be so in heaven. We shall eat of 'the tree which is in the midst of the paradise of God.'

Ver. 5, *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices.*—By thunderings and lightnings are meant the judgments of God. Ps. xviii. 13, 14, 'The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice, hailstones and coals of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.' And, Ps. xxix. 3, 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.' They are said to come 'out of the throne,' because all judgments do come from God, as sitting in his church, and for his church's sake doth God use them. Ps. lxviii. 35, 'O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that *giveth strength* and power unto his people. Blessed be God!' Amos i. 2,

'And he said, The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.' Voices also proceed out of the throne; which is more general, and extends unto promises, and answers to prayers.

Seven lamps, which are the seven spirits of God.—By these are noted out the Holy Ghost, and the variety of his gifts and operations, or manifestations of himself in the church. That the Holy Ghost is meant is evident by chap. i. 4, where John wishes 'grace and peace from the seven spirits which are before God's throne;' which he ought not to have wished from any, but from the Holy Ghost, who is the third Person. And these manifestations are counted seven, because of the variety of gifts. For otherwise, that Person is but 'one Spirit,' 1 Cor. xii. 11. They are compared to fire, because they give light and heat; and the allusion here is to the candlesticks in the temple.

Ver. 6.—There was a 'sea of glass like unto crystal,' in allusion to Solomon's sea; but this was purer than that, which was only of brass, Exod. xxx. 17–20, and typified out Christ's blood to wash in, both for justification of person and sanctification of life: so Heb. x. 22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water;' 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;' Tit. iii. 5, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' And this blood of Christ stands in the church, as the sea in which we must wash, chiefly when we come to worship. Therefore wash before you worship.

And there were 'four beasts full of eyes before and behind;' by which are meant church officers:—

1. Because of the situation of them, between the throne and the elders, who are round about.

2. Because they are the leaders of the praise, and so the mouths of the congregation, ver. 9, 10. They are not beasts properly, as we understand and speak; not brutes, but living wights: the Greek word, which wants a full and proper expression in one English word, signifies so. They are called *living*, to shew that they have, or should have, *life* in them to quicken others. They are *four*, and the throne is *four-square*, and so they are said to be in the midst between every angle; to shew that they are complete for number, and should look every way to all the necessities of the church, both for soul and body.

They are 'full of eyes,' because they are to be overseers, Acts xx. 28. And they have eyes *within* as well as *without*, to see to their own hearts, as well as to others.

Ver. 7, *And the first beast was like a lion*—who is the *ruling elder*, who needs the courage of a lion, to deal with men's spirits in case of sins, that deserve to be brought to the church, or to have admonition to prevent that course.

The second was like a calf, or ox,—for so the Septuagint translates the Hebrew word forty times,—the *pastor*, who is like an ox for laboriousness, and taking pains in treading out the corn.

The third beast had a face like a man—the *deacons* and *widows*,* which are all one office in a kind, who have a face of a man; a man's heart being

* Apparently referring to 1 Tim. v., where widows seem to be spoken of as specially eligible as deaconesses.—ED.

disposed and inclined for mercifulness and pitifulness, which is proper to a man, not beasts.

And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle—the *teacher*, who hath eyes like an eagle, quickly to spy out all errors; and then they soar aloft into high mysteries.

Ver. 8.—They had 'each of them six wings,' to shew their aptness and readiness to fly and act all manner of ways. So in Ezekiel * the cherubim had, who were types of these. 'They rest not day nor night;' to shew they labour continually; crying *Holy, holy, holy.* These worshipped God in Trinity. And they are the mouths of the congregation; for when they begin, the four-and-twenty elders fall down: ver. 9–11, 'And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four-and-twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.' And then they altogether, both one and the other, praise him for his works of creation; acknowledging him both the efficient and the end for which they were created: and not only for whom they were created at first, but for whom they are so still; their being and motion serving to that end, and working for his glory materially.

* The cherubim in Ezekiel are represented with *four* wings; the seraphim in Isaiah with *six*.—ED.

CHAPTER II.

The exposition of the 5th chapter.

THE stage being built in the 4th chapter, the chorus, which is the church, being set, here begins the prologue; and that so elegant and stately a one as was never heretofore invented, or put before any poem.

First, Here is a 'book sealed,' presented in his hand who sits on the throne. Which book contains God's decrees to be executed until the day of judgment.

Secondly, Here is a proclamation made to all creatures, to find out one who should be found worthy to open it.

Thirdly, There were none such found in heaven, nor in earth.

Fourthly, John weeps, thinking there would be an end of his visions, and that he must put up his pen.

Fifthly, In this strait comes Christ, and takes upon him the opening and fulfilling of this book, and all the decrees therein contained.

Sixthly, At this the chorus fall down and worship.

Ver. 1.—First, What is this book? Many make it to be the Scriptures. But it is plain, by what all along does follow, that it is a book containing the affairs of the world and the church, and God's decrees about them both. For upon the opening every seal, John sees a vision containing the matter of the ensuing chapters, namely, the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th. And when the seals were all taken off, chap. x. 8, then John is bidden to 'eat the book,' that he might prophesy again the other part of this prophecy. So that it is this very book of the Revelation, and the government of the world and his church that is set forth therein, which Christ, by taking the book, undertakes to manage, perform, and execute, and gives it to John. Which agrees with what is said at the beginning of this book, chap. i. 1, 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.'

Ver. 2.—A strong angel thereupon proclaims, 'Who is worthy to loose the seals of this book?' &c. The use of the seals is not simply to shew that it cannot be known, as Daniel's sealed book did shew that the things in it could not be known till the end: Dan. xii. 4, 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.' This signified not only so, but it is for the setting out the glory of Christ, and how he was only able to take the book, and loose the seals, &c.

1. God causeth a general proclamation to be made to all creatures; as some kings have done for some noble service, promising a great reward, as Saul did, 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 27.

2. An angel makes this proclamation, to shew that none among men

could; and it was a strong angel, that so his voice may reach all creatures. The end of which was—

(1.) To stir up strong desires in John, and all else that read, to search into the meaning of this prophecy. What he did exhort to, chap. i. 3, and by promise provoke unto, here he does the same again by this proclamation.

(2.) To set out the weakness of the creature, still to the end that so the honour of Christ might the more appear, in that he only can do this. It is God's manner thus to endear mercies to us, as he did a wife unto Adam. He first brought all creatures unto him, that so he might see that there was not a meet help for him among them. So in the work of salvation, he lets the soul try all means first, as to run to duties, and all other helps, and then he brings it to Christ, 1 Cor. i., that his power may appear. First, he lets the world try their 'wisdom,' what that could do; and then sends 'the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe,' ver. 21, 25. It is a question among the school-men, whether any mere creature could satisfy for sin? Some say it might; and some say it is a needless question. But it is a necessary thing to know that a creature cannot; for it glorifies Christ the more, as that all creatures here were first challenged: which is an argument against that also; for if they could not open the book, they could much less have redeemed us, that being made a greater thing, ver. 9, where they sing that 'Christ was therefore worthy to open the book, because he had redeemed us.'

Use.—Hence learn we to renounce all kings, priests, and prophets, except Christ, who is a priest to redeem, a prophet to teach and reveal the mysteries of God, and a king to execute all God's decrees. It is good to go over all the creatures, and to renounce them, and say, I will be saved by none of you. Suppose the work of redemption were yet to be done, and God should make this proclamation, as here: 'Find me out a party able to redeem; call a council, and seek one fit for the purpose.' Surely none would be found; and then how would we howl and weep, as John did here, and count ourselves undone! And then, suppose God should set out Christ at last, as one able to save to the uttermost, but this not till he had tried what you could do for yourselves; surely this would nonplus you. But God would not thus put you to it; and therefore took another course, and the more to commend his love unto us, he himself found out Christ, and spake to him to die for us, and do the work of redemption to our hands.

Who is worthy?—It is not simply an act of power to break open the seals; but there must be an authority by *worth*. So that which puts the value on Christ's satisfaction was the worth of his person. And thus in this act of opening the book, a mere creature might have had as much habitual grace, and performed as much duty; but who is worthy? It was a personal worth which carried it: 'Such an high priest became us, who is higher than the heavens,'—that is, than the angels,—Heb. vii. 26.

Ver. 3, *None was found worthy.*—Observe the word *none;* it is not restrained to man, (*no man,*) but never a reasonable creature, either in the heavens, as the angels; nor on earth, as men; nor under the earth, as devils; nor holy men departed, who are said to go down to the grave: all these, nor any of these, were 'able to open the book, neither to look thereon,'—that is, so as to understand it, for else John could, and did look on it, ver. 1.

Now to loose the seals, and open the book, is not simply to know God's mind in his decrees, but to make the vision of them to John, and to execute and fulfil them in their times. It is an allusion to those who take a com-

mission, who do it, not only to look on it, but to fulfil it. It is a commission sealed, so that this proclamation is in effect thus :—'Who is able to be God's commissioner, to take this book, and make the visions to John, and in their times to produce and execute them?' And this appears from chap. vi. 1, 'And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.' Still as the seals are opened by the Lamb, there is a vision made to John of what shall be done. Therefore the Lamb is presented, not simply as one that should take the book, but as one that hath eyes and horns—eyes of providence, and horns of power to execute. And this agrees with Gen. xlix. 9, 10, where Judah is made a type of Christ, and called a lion's whelp, and a sceptre, and a lawgiver, to take God's laws from him, and execute them; for in that respect it is that Judah is called a lawgiver in the place above cited, not in respect of making or giving laws, but in respect of executive power to see God's laws kept. So Christ here takes this book as to deliver it to us, to execute the decrees of it.

Ver. 4, *And I wept much.*—His despairing put him upon weeping; he was called up to heaven to see visions, but meets with a stop. This was to set off the mercy, to try his heart, and to render his joy greater.

Obs.—God in greatest mercies may make greatest stops; he may so bring to despair that no hope shall be seen, yet at length shew himself in mercy. So to John here. So likewise in the first work of conversion many times; and so in other great works. John was called to see visions, yet a stop and pause was in his view made.

Use.—Here John is comforted, first, by a stander-by, endeavouring to uphold his heart; and, secondly, by the sight of the Lamb, ver. 6.

Observe here the degrees God useth to comfort his people by; first, letting fall something giving hopes of Christ, so to draw the soul patiently to wait; then, secondly, shewing it Christ himself. God might have at first shewed John the Lamb, but he first comforts him by a stander-by, (as Job first heard by the hearing of the ear,) and then his eye saw the Lamb.

Christ, the only opener of this book and giver of this prophecy, is diversely expressed :—

1. He is called 'the root of David,' out of Isa. xi. 10. Christ put this riddle to the Pharisees, How David could call him Lord, if he were his son? So here it may be asked, How could he be called the *root* of David, if he were the *son* of David, and so a branch of that root? The truth is, he is the root of David, and of all the saints. He was the root of his ancestors, and the father of his mother. The root of any family is in Scripture put for the eldest son in it, who is as the root of the rest. So, Isa. xiv. 30, 'I will kill thy root with famine;' that is, thy first-born, the root of thy house; for in opposition he says, 'and the first-born of the poor shall be fed.' So Mal. iv. 1. Therefore, in that Christ is called the root of David, is meant, that he is the first-born among all his brethren, as he is called in Rom. viii. 29. And Ps. lxxxix. 27, so God calls David in the type, but intends Christ thereby, when he says, 'I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth;' and, ver. 29, 'His seed shall endure for ever.' In this is Christ the root of David, that he is the first-born of every creature; of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

2. He is called the 'lion of the tribe of Judah;' and this in a manifest allusion to the prophecy in Gen. xlix. 10, wherein Judah, as this place shews, is made a type of Christ. And it warrants the application of all there unto Christ. Now Judah was called a lion—

(1.) Because out of Judah came all the worthies and lion-like men, as Joshua,* Othniel, and David, who were all shadows of Christ; therefore, Gen. xlix. 9, he is called *an old lion*, as the word is, a courageous, hearty lion. So, 2 Sam. xvii. 10, valiant men are said to have hearts like lions. Such was Christ, who durst 'engage his heart to draw near to God,' Jer. xxx. 21.

(2.) Judah had the kingdom, whereof a lion is the emblem; therefore sceptre and lawgiver are attributed to him, ver. 10. So that it is as much as to say, Christ, the king by inheritance, as Judah was, shall overcome.

(3.) Judah did take the prey, the land; it was done by Judah's worthies, Joshua, Caleb, &c. And when, as a lion, they had taken that prey, they couched and had rest, as in Solomon's days, 1 Kings iv. 21; which was also prophesied of, Num. xxiii. 24, 'Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and shall not lie down till they have eaten the prey.' And, Gen. xlix. 9, 'He couched as an old lion; who shall raise him up?' So Christ, when he had led captivity captive, sits down quietly in heaven, as it were, couching and lying in wait, especially till the day of judgment, and till before, when he shall see an opportunity to avenge the enemies to his church, when he will appear as an old lion, who, being roused, suddenly leaps on the prey; especially in the latter days, when 'the gatherings of the people shall be unto him,' as the context is, then shall his kingdom be as of a 'lion among beasts,' Mic. v. 8, where the prophet speaks of Christ's kingdom and conquest in the calling of the Jews, as he had done of Christ's birth, ver. 2. Now that kingdom is the scope of this book.

Ver. 6, *And in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain*, &c.—John had heard of Christ as a *lion*, but he sees him as a *lamb*. So many a poor soul is afraid of him, till it comes to see him, and be acquainted with him. But he in the end will be found to be a lamb, and a lamb that hath seven eyes to run to and fro through the earth for the good of his saints; and seven horns, not to hurt them, but to defend them, and to butt his and their enemies. Therefore let not your thoughts of Christ be all as of a lion; for though he hath the courage and strength of a lion, yet he hath the meekness of a lamb too unto you; who, therefore, have cause to wonder at and praise this mixture in him. Christ is called a lamb in allusion to the sacrifices of the old law, which were most commonly of lambs; two lambs a day, Num. xxviii. 3. Here he was to be represented as a priest; as before, in being called a lion, he was presented as a king. And therefore it follows, 'as it had been slain.'

This Lamb 'stood in the midst of the throne,' nearer than the four beasts who stood between the throne and the elders; and this, for that he is the Mediator between his church and God.

As it had been slain.—That is—

1. As if he were newly slain, his blood perpetually remaining fresh, as if he had been slain but yesterday, Heb. ix.

2. But *as* slain, to shew that he doth not remain slain and dead, but is alive. So, chap. i. 18, 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.'

Stood a Lamb.—Standing imports a readiness to afford help. When Stephen died, he saw Christ *standing* at God's right hand, as ready to receive him. It also shews his readiness to intercede.

Having seven horns.—Horns are put for power, with which to push. So, chap. xvii. 12, 'and the ten horns are ten kings.' So by seven horns here is

* It is strange that Joshua should be repeatedly mentioned as of the tribe of Judah, whereas he was of the tribe of Ephraim.—ED.

meant all kingly power. Seven is a number of perfection; and it shews that Christ hath power to open the seven seals. And as there are seven trumpets and seven vials, so Christ hath seven horns; that is, power to fulfil all these. Antichrist riseth like Christ, and comes with power, Rev. xiii. 12. But what discovers him? He hath but two horns; the church needs not fear him. The Lamb hath seven horns to vindicate himself of his enemies. Fear not kings neither, though they be ten; Christ is King of kings. And fear not the devil, who is as a roaring lion; for Christ, the lion of the tribe of Judah, is stronger than he, and will bind him sure enough for hurting of thee.

And seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.—The Spirit, not in his personal subsistence, is here meant, but in his instrumental working by gifts and providence, and so is called seven spirits before, in chap. iv. *5*; which seven spirits before the throne are gifts in the church which are from Christ, for he is the fountain of spiritual gifts, and hath the Spirit without measure. But here, by the seven spirits in Christ are not meant gifts poured out, but eyes of providence sent into the earth, by which he knows and sees all things; which alludes to that in Zech. iv. 10, 'For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth;' and implies the perfection of the knowledge and providence of Christ, to order all affairs on earth for his church's good, as in 2 Chron. xvi. 9; and in Zechariah, before quoted, he ordered the affairs of the Persian monarchy for the building of his church. Christ, as man, hath eyes as well as horns, to discern and guide all things here below. His human nature is the instrument of all God's power; all goes through his hands; and all the works of God's providence go through his view: he knows whatsoever is done in the whole world. But why should Christ be presented here in this chapter under these notions of a lion of Judah's tribe, and a lamb, and the root of David, rather than any other?

1. In that he speaks in the language of the Old Testament, and of John the Baptist, who was under the Old Testament; for Christ is everywhere spoken of throughout the volume of that book, as appears by Luke xxiv. 27 where it is said that Christ, 'beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, did expound unto them the things concerning himself.' Now Moses called him 'a lion,' Gen. xlix. 9; Isaiah called him 'a lamb,' chap. liii. 7, and 'the root of David,' chap. xi. 10; and then John Baptist called him 'the Lamb of God, which bears the sins of the world.' Wherefore, as all other things in this book are set forth in allusions to the Old Testament, so these descriptions of Christ also.

2. He gives Christ these titles in relation to the work of redemption, of which mention is made, ver. 9.

Now to that two things are required:—

(1.) A price to be paid to God; and so as a lamb he hath 'redeemed us to God by his blood,' ver. 9.

(2.) Power to deliver us out of the hands of our enemies; and so he is a lion that overcomes.

3. It hath relation especially to the opening of this book, and executing the affairs contained in it, and so those titles are most proper; for—

(1.) He needed to die for it, and so is presented as 'a lamb slain.' For that very price that salvation did cost, the same must each revelation to us cost also. And his being simply the Son of God, and so knowing the

counsels of God written in his decrees, was not enough for him to make them known to us; but to reveal this counsel, as in a book to be opened to us, he must needs die, our sins otherwise hindering it. Hence it is said, ver. 9, 'Thou art worthy to open the book, for thou wast slain,' &c. So therefore, as a lamb, he is said to take sin away, that hindered the revelation of it to us.

(2.) As a lion he needed courage to encounter God's wrath; and by breaking through a consuming fire, to approach his throne, and take the book. 'Who is this that hath engaged his heart to draw near unto me?' Jer. xxx. 31. No angel durst have presumed to come so near God.

(3.) As a lion he needed to overcome death, and rise to execute the contents of this book. They say that a lion sleeps the first three days after he is brought forth, but then being roused by the roaring of the old lion, he, after that, sleeps the least of any creature. So did Christ rise by the power of his Father, to sleep no more.

4. Being risen, he is set forth—

(1.) As a lion of Judah; for that in that prophecy, Gen. xlix. 49, as also, Ps. lx. 7, Judah, in respect of his kingly office, is called God's lawgiver; not simply in respect of giving the laws,—that Moses, of the tribe of Levi, did,—but because Judah executed them. Now, in that Christ did here take the book of God's decrees, and undertook to execute and fulfil them as God's commissioner, therefore he is in this respect most properly here called the 'lion of the tribe of Judah.'

(2.) He is here set forth as 'a lamb having seven horns, and as many eyes;' and this, in as fit and proper a respect as might be, to signify his being one not only fit to give this prophecy, but to effect the things contained in it by his horns and eyes. And he is said to have seven horns and seven eyes, to shew his full power to open the seven seals, and to blow the seven trumpets, and to pour out the seven vials. He is such a prophet as never was, in that he not only makes a bare revelation of things, but brings them to pass, and makes them good. God gave him the platform of occurrences to come, and power and wisdom to order the accomplishment of them. He is also set forth both as a lamb and a lion to shew his priestly and kingly office; and how, by virtue of both, he makes us kings and priests, as they sing, ver. 10; and having his kingdom in their eye, they are confirmed in the promise of it by a remembrance of him as a lamb and a lion, thus strong and powerful. As a lamb, he purchaseth the revelation of what concerns his church; and as a lamb with horns and eyes, he effects the accomplishment of it. And the scope and sum of this book being to shew how Christ rules the world and his church, till he hath put down all rule, and how he then takes the kingdom himself; therefore he is described as a lamb, in respect of his quiet governing the affairs of the world and the church, until that his kingdom, which then, as a lion, by open force he assumes, and rescues the church, as a prey, out of the enemies' jaws, and that by the right of a promised succession from Judah and David; for which cause those titles of the 'root of David' and 'lion of Judah' do here come in.

1. In a word, this title of his being the root of David shews his right to that kingdom which he is to receive, of which David and his kingdom was but the type.

2. His being called a lamb slain is to shew both a right and title to that kingdom, and also the price by which he purchased it, even his own blood.

3. His being a lion is to shew the power by which he conquers, obtains, and possesses it; therefore this heavenly chorus, or company, here, when

they once see Christ, by taking the book, to undertake the accomplishment of this prophecy, (the conclusion of which is his instalment into his kingdom,) they, in the joy and faith of it, shout out beforehand, saying, 'We shall reign on the earth;' as looking on all that was to forego his kingdom, and to come between this vision and his kingdom to come, all as already done, and having this kingdom chiefly in their eye which should come.

Now from the 8th verse to the end of the chapter is a doxology, or a giving praise for the Lamb's taking the book; which song consists of four parts, or was sung by four companies: as—

1. Four-and-twenty elders and four beasts—the church of men upon earth. They begin and raise the song: ver. 8, 'And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.'

2. The angels join their voices: ver. 11, 'And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.'

3. The creatures come in also: ver. 13, 'And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

4. The beasts close all, saying *Amen:* ver. 14, 'And the four beasts said, *Amen.* And the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.'

Obs.—Observe in the general, That the sons of men are the eminentest praisers of God; they are the leaders in this heavenly choir, and they conclude the song. The reason of which is, in that the highest work that God ever did is the work of redemption, which concerns us, not the angels; for which, notwithstanding, the angels praise him, in Luke ii., as also here: yea, all the creatures rejoice in our redemption, ver. 13. But still we are the first-fruits, we are the leaders in the song, whom the angels follow. It is not said by them, 'Thou hast redeemed *us* to God by thy blood;' that concerns *us*, though they sing praise too.

Use 1.—Learn we from hence to bless God for his mercy and goodness to others. We see the angels do so for us, who yet cannot sing as we, with an interest, and yet they praise God for our redemption; and this is their highest grace.

Use 2.—Learn we to bless God in a sense of our interest. That will raise our hearts a degree higher, as it was with the church of men in their song here, ver. 9, 10.

Ver. 8.—The praisers, who were of the sons of men, are described, (1.) as having harps; (2.) golden vials: in allusion to the Levitical service in the temple, where they had musical instruments, and incense in bowls or vials, which, Zech. xiv. 20, are called 'the bowls of the altar.' Not that musical instruments are to be in the worship of God now, neither incense: which, as it was the type of prayer and praises, Ps. cxli. 2, 'Let my prayer come up before thee as incense;' so those harps were of that 'spiritual melody,' as the Apostle calls it, which we make in our hearts to God, even of 'spiritual songs,' Eph. v. 19. Therefore John himself interprets the odours or incense here to be the prayers of the saints. And their hearts are the golden vials, having faith purer than gold, as Peter speaks, which is the spring of all their prayers, and their harps also are their hearts; *corda* and *chordæ* are near akin.

And *every one* is said to have harps; for in public worship all should join. The little strings go to make up a concert, as well as the great. Though thou hast but little grace, yet God's worship would not be complete without thee. And whereas John calls these odours the prayers of the saints, it makes nothing for what the Papists would hence collect,—namely, that the saints in heaven offer up the prayers of the saints on earth. For—

1. This company are, as we said before, the church of men on earth.

2. These here offer not the prayers of others, but their own; for both themselves make the song, and that a new one; and also the benefit they praise God for in it is their own, 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.' Those words, therefore, 'the prayers of the saints,' are but the interpretation which John adds; and do imply only this, that these were saints, and their odours were their prayers.

Ver. 9, *And they sung a* new *song.*—1. You shall find, in the Psalms, that when David had a new occasion, in a further degree, to praise God, he says, 'I will sing a new song;' now here there was a new occasion given.

2. It is called *new* in opposition to the *old* song under the old testament; as, John xiii. 34, 'I give you a new commandment;' that is, of the gospel, called new, in opposition to the commandments of the old law. In the 4th chapter of this book, these elders had sung a song for the work of creation, ver. 11; but here they sing for the work of redemption, as ver. 9, which is the eminent work of the new testament, as creation was of the old; and therefore it is called *a new song.*

3. There is a more special reason why they should sing a new song, for that the *New Jerusalem* was in their eye: Christ's kingdom and their kingdom (we shall reign on earth); there 'all things shall be made new.' And therefore their song is now a new song for the instalment of their new king. Thus, Ps. xcvi. 1, which is a psalm of this kingdom of Christ, as appears by ver. 10–13, doth therefore begin with these words, 'O sing unto the Lord a new song.'

Use 1.—Learn we from hence to frame new matter of praise, and to have fresh affections upon every new occasion.

Use 2.—We are to bless God, both for our creation and our redemption, and to take in the mention of old blessings when we give thanks for new. As a good scribe is said to bring forth of his treasure new things and old, so in thanksgiving we are to sing the old song and the new.

The matter of the song is praise to the Lamb; where we have—

First, The person praised, the Lamb, 'Thou art worthy,' spoken in answer to the proclamation before made: 'Who is worthy?' Thou, and thou alone; for 'by him, and for him, are all things,' Col. i. 16.

Secondly, The things for which they praise him; as—

1. For his *death*, that he died to redeem them.

2. For his *resurrection*, intimated in this, 'Thou *wast* slain,' the one making us priests, the other kings; as follows, Rev. v. 10. 'And to this end Christ died and rose, that he might be Lord and King,' Rom. xiv. 9.

The word here which is translated *redeemed* is ἠγόρασας, *bought*, in the original. 'For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and people, and tongue, and nation,' Rev. v. 9. From hence observe—

Obs. 1.—That the blood of Christ was paid as a price to God for the purchasing of our redemption. So, 1 Cor. vi. 20, 'bought with a price.' And in 1 Tim. ii. 6, it is called a ransom.

Obs. 2.—Yet Christ hath not redeemed all men; for it is not *every nation and people*, but *out of* every nation, the elect only.

Obs. 3.—In that they say, Christ is 'worthy to receive the book,' because 'he was slain,' it argues, this book of the Revelation is a special fruit of his death, and so should be the more prized by us. Before Christ's death, we have his own word for it that he knew not when the day of judgment should be; but now, since he was slain he doth, for he is pronounced worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, ver. 9.

Ver. 10, *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.*—Christ was before set forth as a lion, for a king; so as a lamb, for a priest. And both were mentioned, to shew the ground of our being both kings and priests: 'We shall reign on earth.'

From hence observe—

1. That this comforted the saints of old, even the consideration of Christ's kingdom on earth. And how peremptory are they! 'We shall reign.' They mention that, because that is the end and scope of the Revelation, and the conclusion of this book, when the seals are off, and the contents of the book accomplished; and therefore they have that in their eye. And seeing Christ undertakes the accomplishment of all, whereof this is the issue, they are confirmed in the faith of it.

2. That this kingdom of Christ on earth to come is a far more glorious condition for the saints than what their souls have now in heaven; for these here overlook that condition which yet they were to run through, and their thoughts fly to this for comfort, 'We shall reign on earth.'

Ver. 11.—In the 11th verse comes in the other company of angels, and their song; who—

1. For their *number*, are 'ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.' So likewise, Dan. vii. 10, where the same throne and kingdom of Christ is prophesied of, there is the same number of his guard of angels mentioned: 'A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.' Observe from hence, that God hath another world of rational creatures which we see not. And what a story then will the latter day produce! And what need we fear when there are so many for us, as Elisha said to his servant, 2 Kings vi. 16, for they are all our guardians too?

2. For their *station;* they are behind the elders, yet 'round about the throne,' having all in a ring as it were. These are the guard of the 'queen of heaven,' 'the Lamb's wife,' the church. So, Ps. xxxiv. 7, 'The angels of the Lord encompass round about them that fear him.' And, Heb. i. 14, it is said, 'They are sent out to minister' for the good of the saints.

Ver. 12.—The song follows in the next verse: 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power,' &c. Here observe—

1. That Christ, though he were worthy by inheritance, yet he was worthy by purchase also; so the words 'that was slain' do imply.

2. As he hath seven horns and seven eyes, so he hath a seven-fold praise.

3. To express their strong desires to give him sufficient praises, and such as were due unto him, they heap up many good things, of which they pronounce him worthy.

4. None is worthy to be the king of all the world but only Jesus Christ. And indeed it were too much for any creature. The angels themselves were top-heavy of their glory, which made them reel out of heaven; but Christ hath the Godhead to poise him. No beast is naturally a king of beasts but

the lion, says the philosopher; neither is any worthy to be king of all creatures but this lion of the tribe of Judah.

The things they attribute to him are—

1. *Power;* that is, authority over all. So says Christ, John xvii. 2, 'To me all power is given.'

2. *Riches;* that is, possession of all creatures. 'All things are Christ's, and so ours,' 1 Cor. iii. 21. Riches of glory, knowledge, all are his.

3. *Strength,* joined to his authority. He is able to work anything; not as other kings, who though they have authority, have yet no more personal strength than other men; but Christ hath seven horns too.

4. *Wisdom;* and this as large as his power and dominions. He knows all that God means to do; and sees all with his own eyes, not with other men's, as other kings do.

5. *Honour;* that respects what all creatures bring in to him. They all adore, and bow the knee to him, Phil. ii. 10.

6. *Glory;* both in his personal excellencies, and also what his Father gives him. He sits at God's right hand, and governs with him; and in his person is the brightness of his Father's glory; and especially shall be made manifest when he shall come to judge the world.

7. *Blessing;* which respects that glory which, for his special goodness to them, his saints do give him. Others, yea, even the devils, do give honour to Christ, but not blessing. That the saints only give; for that respects in God the communication of goodness. They only bless him whom he blesseth first. Take notice therefore, that Christ hath all desirable excellencies in him; power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and blessing.

Ver. 13, *And every creature.*—Every creature in its kind shall worship Christ, Phil. ii. 10, 11. Every creature comes in here, because when Christ's kingdom is set up, they shall be renewed, Rom. viii. 21, and be delivered 'into a glorious liberty.'

The church of men began the song, and these continue it; for it is the mercy to them is the matter of their song, and the instauration of their king. And therefore we are the more to be stirred up to do it, in that we see even all the creatures do it, whom it doth not so much concern.

Ver. 14, *And the four beasts said, Amen.*—And with them the elders join. Observe that the officers do both begin and end.

Amen.—It seems to be an ordinance that this word should be used in the close; and that first by the officers, and then by the people. A precedent for the practice of this you have likewise in 1 Cor. xiv. 16, 'Else when thou shalt bless with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say *Amen* at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?'

CHAPTER III.

The scheme and division of the whole prophecy, from the beginning of the 6th chapter.

THE *stage* being set, chap. iv., and the *prologue* acted, chap. v., the *prophecy* itself begins, in several scenes and visions, chap. vi. But ere I can proceed to tell you what the six first seals of the 6th chapter, or any vision else, doth concern, I must necessarily give you the argument and the division of the whole book; which will afford a better prospect, and a more delectable view, than that of the glory of all the kingdoms of this world, although that was made once in the twinkling of an eye; for what can be more pleasant than to have an insight, though but a general one, into what is God's design and project upon the world, in which the church is seated, and the condition of the church itself, in the world, since Christ's ascension? Now this you have as artificially, and in as many scenes in this book presented, as ever was story in any poem.

Now for a general insight into this prophecy, which may serve both as a compass and a chart to us, in sailing over this sea, that we may know still where we are, I premise these general propositions or assertions concerning the whole prophecy:—

Prop. I.—That this ensuing prophecy, from the beginning of chap. vi. to the end of the book, contains two prophecies, distinct each from other. That book mentioned chap. v. is brought in to represent this prophecy of the Revelation, as was shewed, to be given to the church, and executed by Christ, the Lamb and Lion of Judah.

Now in that book two things are distinctly to be considered, as given with that book:—

1. The seals on the back-side of the book.
2. The contents of the book itself. Now—

1. As the book contains matter of prophecy, so do the very seals also. And accordingly the visions of those seals do take up the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters. Both books and seals are mysterious, and do contain matter of prophecy. The very back-side and cover of this book of God is prophetical. This book is all composed of prophecies; and the use of the seals is not simply to shew that the matter of this book was difficult to be known, as in Scripture phrase a sealed book imports; but, besides, they serve to contain a matter of vision to be delivered.

2. Add to this, that answerably, ver. 2. of chap. v., in revealing and delivering this prophecy, two difficulties are distinctly mentioned:—

(1.) The loosing of the seals. (2.) The opening of the book.

Now if the seals only did import the difficulty of this book, it would not have been made a new difficulty to *open* the book. But it is expressly made a distinct difficulty to open the book after the seals are loosened. This

therefore was, because to loosen the seals, was to deliver one prophecy; and to open the book when these seals were loosened, was to deliver another.

3. Accordingly, in the 6th chapter, when the Lamb opens the first seal, a vision is seen, and therein a prophecy delivered; so when the second is opened, there is mentioned another; and when the third, a third vision; and so on in that chapter. And the seventh seal produceth seven angels with seven trumpets; six of which are recounted from chap. viii. to chap. x., and the seventh trumpet is in the end of the 11th chapter.

In the second place, when these seals are, the one of them after the other, taken off, and the prophecy and visions of those seals seen and ended, then an angel comes with a 'little book'—alone, without seals—'open,' chap. x. 2, as containing a new prophecy for John. Now when that this first of the seals was past, then accordingly John was bidden to eat it, ver. 9, 10, to be enabled for a new prophecy. So, ver. 11, it is expressly said, 'Thou must prophesy again before many tongues and kings.' And because a new prophecy was upon the eating of that book to begin, hence, ver. 8, it is said, 'The same voice which he had heard before did speak from heaven again.' Now that voice, or speech, he had heard but twice before, and it was both times whenas a new prophecy was given; once when the Revelation first began, and the epistles to the seven churches, chap. i. 10. And then another time, when this general prophecy begins, chap. iv. 1, which is distinct from that prophecy of the seven epistles in the three first chapters, which is peculiar to the seven churches. And now again, chap. x. 8, as beginning a new and third prophecy.

Obs.—In that the seals themselves do thus contain a prophecy, observe, That in God's book nothing is without a meaning. Christ said, 'Not a tittle of it shall pass;' let it not therefore pass us. The very cover here is prophetical; much more does every word written in it contain matter of instruction. Search the Scriptures narrowly, and slight not a tittle of them, though you understand them not. There is enough in what you understand, to admire; and in what you understand not, to adore; as judging it the word of the great God, every syllable of which has its weight and value.

Prop. II.—That both these prophecies, both seal and book-prophecy, do run over the same whole course of times, from Christ's ascension unto his kingdom; containing in them several events and occurrences successively, from that time to this of his kingdom, with which this book ends: namely, the seal-prophecy, from chap. vi. to chap. xii., doth act over one story of all times, to the end of time; and then the book-prophecy, from chap. xii., beginning at the same time again, doth act over another story of all the same times, unto the end. So that the same whole race of time is run over in both, but with several and distinct occurrences; even as the two books of the Kings and Chronicles do contain the stories of the same course of time from David unto the captivity. But the book of the Kings handles most the affairs of the kings of Israel; and that of the Chronicles more eminently holds forth the story of the kings of Judah.

Now to demonstrate this apart; first of the seal-prophecy, and then of the book-prophecy:—

1. For the seal-prophecy; lay but these three things together, (whereof the two first were never denied by any,) and the point in hand will necessarily follow:—

(1.) That in the 6th chapter the six seals do begin; with a prophecy, either from John's time or from Christ's. To prove this, besides those evidences which, when we come to interpret them, will more evidently

appear, as that the first seal begins with Christ's going forth in preaching the gospel, so to lay the first foundation of his kingdom; which going forth refers to those primitive times. As also that in the fifth seal, you have the first mention of the bloody persecution of the saints, professing the gospel, in the same primitive times; which appears by this, that they are told that when the rest of their brethren, by the succeeding persecutions, should be killed, they then should have vengeance upon their enemies for their blood spilt; which argues these in the 6th chapter to be those first persecutions. Besides these evidences, I say, it appears more generally, because the prophecy itself does but here begin, all in the former chapters being but a prologue and a preparation. And it begins with John's time at least; for, chap. i. 1, he says, he was to shew to Christ's servants things which should shortly come to pass: the things contained in this prophecy entering into an accomplishment presently upon John's writing them, and divulging them to the churches.

(2.) The second thing, which also none ever denied, is, that these seals and trumpets, which do in order succeed one another, do contain a continued prophecy of events following one another in a succession of ages downward. To this purpose you may observe the phrase used, chap. x. 7, 'In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound,' which imports that these several trumpets do, as scenes in a comedy, share among them the several ages and times succeeding one another. And in like manner the seals have their days, even as the rest of the trumpets have their days proper, and peculiarly given to them. And look how in order they are placed, one before the other, as first, second, and third, &c., so do the several times or ages precede or succeed one the other: so as the days of the first seal are the first age, and things done in that age after John, and so on the second seal, &c.

(3.) Add to the two former this consideration, that the seventh trumpet, in the 11th chapter, doth end all time, and so becomes a period to one distinct prophecy of all time. This appears from chap. x. After the seals were passed over and seen with their effects, and the six trumpets had sounded in the 8th and 9th chapters foregoing, the angel swears, ver. 6, 7 of that 10th chapter, that 'time should be no longer;' but 'in the days of the seventh trumpet,' all should be finished. And therefore, chap. xi., from ver. 15,—where the seventh trumpet is brought in sounding in its order, when his day and turn comes to sound,—must needs be esteemed the end of that prophecy: for it brings you to the end of all times; that is, of the times which God thought fit to allot this world, and his enemies in the world, to rule and reign. First, the monarchs and great men of the world are to have their time here, and then Christ's time, and the time of his saints, is to begin; as, ver. 15, 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ,' &c.; and, ver. 18, 'The time of the dead is come, that they should be judged.' When this world's hour-glass is run out, then that of another world is to be turned up to run, when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. So that, from the first seal to the seventh trumpet, is run over all the time that the monarchies and kingdoms of this world, whilst they should be in the hands of Christ's enemies, should continue and last. For that is the time which, towards the end, under the sixth trumpet, the angel that came down under that sixth trumpet sware 'should be no longer.' I shall set down the words of his oath: in the 6th and 7th verses of that 10th chapter, he 'sweareth by him that liveth for ever and ever,'—that is, by God,—'who created the heaven, the earth, and

the sea,' and the things that are in all these his three dominions, 'that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.'

Which whole voice, or words, of the sixth angel do import, (1.) That much of that whole time had now been passed and run out already in the former visions of the seals and trumpets, from the first until now. And, (2.) That now the time allotted by God was brought well-nigh to the very last sands of it. And that the church might have some warning, and be able to make some guess, and compute when this time of the world's monarchy, or kingdoms of the world, should have an end; and so, when the time of the Gentiles should be fulfilled and be no longer; this angel doth, towards the expiration of that whole time, give us, in the 11th chapter, the true computation of that time, during which the last monarchy—you know there are four—on earth should endure, as that which might serve us to compute the period of the whole, and the beginning of Christ's visible kingdom, even the days of the beast, or Pope, who is the last part, with his ten kingdoms of Europe, treading down the church, or holy city; which beast, and his kingdoms supporting him as their head, and whose time, from his first beginning to the near approach of that seventh trumpet, which shall begin to sound not long after, or but a little before his very end, is forty and two months, or, which is all one, one thousand two hundred and threescore days; that is, so many years. And with him all other rule and dominion on earth shall end; and Christ shall take the kingdom, when he shall have destroyed Antichrist through the brightness of his coming, which will grow brighter as his coming is nearer. And withal, this angel gives a signal of occurrences which should immediately forerun the period of this time of his ruin, whereby the church might with some nearness discern his approaching ruin; which he does, in that 11th chapter, by presenting the face of that church, which shall be before the downfall of that kingdom, and the last persecution of the church by the beast, foregoing his ruin, that so the church might have both warning, and not think it strange at the fiery trial which at last was to come upon them; as also to be comforted, for it should be the last; and soon after it, the ending of all time, together with that of the world's kingdoms.

2. The second part of the foresaid general proposition, viz., That there is a new prophecy that runs over the same whole race of time, from the beginning to the end of the world's monarchies, unto Christ's kingdom, beginning at chap. xii., and so on to the end of the book.

Now then, the prophecy of the seals, which runs over the whole time of the world's monarchies, being thus ended, chap. xi., there begins another prophecy at chap. xii., which runs over the same whole race and period of times, though with other occurrences. And this is the other part of this general proposition, which I demonstrate thus, as I did the former:—

First, The 12th chapter begins a new prophecy, not only because that the other having ended all time, this must needs begin again anew; but further, the vision of the woman and the dragon in the 12th chapter must needs be of things foregoing the rise of Antichrist,—the beast in chap. xiii.,—and therefore concerneth the primitive times, which were the times before Antichrist. This is proved thus. The dragon mentioned chap. xii., endeavouring to devour the woman, is cast down from heaven; after which, striving to drown her with a flood, he is prevented; and then John, standing, as the best copies read it, upon the sand of the sea, spies this new beast arising, and the dragon gives his throne and power unto him, chap. xiii. All this, therefore, which

is in the 12th chapter, must necessarily contain a story of things done before the rising of Antichrist, and so by consequence must belong to the primitive times, as the particular interpretation will make more clear.

Secondly, Add to this, that unto this beast, from his first rising in the 13th chapter, there is allowed him to continue forty-two months, or 1260 years, which is the very same period of time upon the expiring of which the seventh trumpet begins, which, as you heard, had ended all time before, chap. xi. 15; and then the 14th chapter, which follows, contains the state of the church during the times of the beast, in their separation from him and opposition of him. And then, chap. xv. and chap. xvi. contain seven vials to ruin this beast; whereof the last doth end all time again, even as the seventh trumpet had done. And this is proved—

1. In that, as when the seventh trumpet should sound, the angel sware 'time should be no longer:' so when the seventh vial is poured out, chap. xvi. 17, a voice says, 'It is done;' that is, time is at an end, all is finished.

2. It is said, chap. xv. 1, that these vials contain the last plagues, in which the wrath of God is fulfilled, and therefore must necessarily make an end of all Christ's enemies, and so of their rule; and together with them, of all their time. And—

3. The same things are said to be done in the pouring out the seventh vial, which is the last of plagues, that are presented to be done at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which is the last of woes. Thus at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, chap. xi. 10, there are said to be 'lightnings, voices, thunderings, earthquakes, and a great hail;' and so likewise upon the pouring forth of the last vial, chap. xvi. 18, there were 'voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake, such as never were on earth before; and so great an hail, that every stone weighed a talent.'

Obj.—But you will say, If there be an end of all when Christ's kingdom comes, then what do the 17th, 18th, and 19th chapters contain, and to what time will you refer them, seeing the description of the kingdom of Christ begins but at the 20th chapter, and so on?

Ans.—The answer, in general, is, that they contain a larger explication or vision of some eminent things that fall out under the time of some of these vials. And therefore the 17th chapter begins thus: 'One of the seven angels which had the seven vials talked with me, and shewed me,' &c., as implying that what follows belonged to their times.

But more particularly—

1. The 17th chapter contains an interpretation of what was spoken concerning the beast in chap. xiii., and shews who that beast is. And as in the prophecy of Daniel the manner of the Holy Ghost was to interpret the visions there made, so here. And of the whore carried by the beast, he says plainly, by way of explication, ver. 18, it is 'that great city that reigneth over the kings of the earth,' namely, Rome. And it was necessary that the Holy Ghost should give an interpretation of some things in this book; and of this especially, as being that which gives light to all the rest, which therefore fitly comes in after all.

2. The 18th chapter, and the 19th, to the 11th verse, doth contain a more poetical description of the ruining of that city, the seat of this last monarchy; and therefore is but a more copious explication of the fifth vial, which, chap. xvi. 10, is said to be poured out upon the seat of the beast; together with a triumphing song of the church's concerning those times, sung at the whore's funeral, and for the approaching marriage of the Lamb. And this, chap. xix. to ver. 11.

3. From thence to the 20th chapter, is a more full description of that last war of the beast, and all the kings of the earth, and their overthrow by Christ: which is therefore all one with the last vial, and the preparation thereunto, as none that shall read from the 13th verse of the 16th chapter unto the end, and compare it with chap. xix. from ver. 11 to the end, will be able to deny. For so it pleased the Holy Ghost, towards the latter end of this prophecy, to give a more full explanation of the two more eminent vials, and the times of them, after he had first, for method's sake, briefly set them together, with the rest, in their order: as in like manner, after he had compendiously set together in one chapter, chap. xx., the reign of Christ during a thousand years, and the universal judgment that follows, he yet spends the 21st chapter in a more copious and magnificent description of the state of the new Jerusalem, and that kingdom of Christ during those thousand years.

Obj.—But then you will say, Unto what will you refer the 11th chapter, from ver. 1 to ver. 15, which is placed, as it were, between both prophecies?

Ans.—I answer, as before, all that discourse delivered by word of Christ's mouth, between the seal and the book-prophecy, doth belong unto both; as containing an exact chronology of that last period of the time of the world's monarchies. By means of which we may easily compute how much that whole time is that both the prophecies do run over, as shall be shewed in the interpretation of that chapter. And withal, there is a signal given of such eminent occurrences befalling the church, as should be most proper and suitable signs of the dawning of Christ's kingdom shortly after to follow; and so of the ending of the time of both prophecies. That as the old Jerusalem, before it was destroyed, had signs given of its destruction imminent; so hath the new Jerusalem also, before it is reared.

Now that these passages in the 11th chapter do belong thus unto both prophecies, appears—

1. In that he speaks of matters contained, and afterwards mentioned in the book-prophecy, chap. xiii., xvi.: as likewise of matters mentioned in the seal-prophecy; namely, of the ending of the sound of the sixth trumpet; which is declared in chap. xi. 14, and called 'the passing away of the second woe.' And—

2. The angel therein mentions how and when the expirations of the times of both prophecies do meet in the sixth trumpet of the seal-prophecy, ending about the time of the date of the beast in the book-prophecy. And thus to insert a chronological table, as it were, between both prophecies, serving them both, and knitting together the times of both in one period; how agreeable is it to the way of historians, who when they run over much time and several matters, use to affix a table of times unto that their history; and so doth our historical prophet John in that 11th chapter.

Prop. III.—The third general proposition, or head, shall be an inquiry into what is the matter or argument prophesied of in this whole book; as also, more particularly, what are the differing subjects of these two several prophecies, the *Seal* and *Book-Prophecy*.

I shall unfold and clear this by several steps and degrees in these propositions following:—

1. It is certain that the subject of both prophecies is the fates and destinies of the kingdoms of the world which should be after Christ's ascension, until he take the kingdom to himself. Therefore at the end or conclusion of the seal and trumpet-prophecy, there is an acclamation that the kingdoms of the world were then become Jesus Christ's, chap. xi. 15, as

having all that while before been under other monarchs' hands, and of which the former part of the prophecy had spoken all along. And therefore he says, 'Time shall be no longer;' that is, for the kingdoms of the world, (that is, not for their worldly kingdoms,) unto which he opposeth that of Christ's. And therefore the book-prophecy also, which begins chap. xii., when it came to be first given, chap. x. 11, hath this prologue or preface unto it, 'Thou must prophesy again before kings and nations,' &c.: *before kings*, that is, about kings, as the style of the prophet is; and that word *again* implies his having prophesied about them before, in the seal-prophecy, although other occurrences in them, and also his being to do it again in this other prophecy following, in new occurrences that concerned the church.

2. The second proposition is, That the whole prophecy concerns only such kingdoms or monarchies of the Gentiles as had to do with the church of Christ. For—

(1.) At the beginning of both prophecies, the church is made the stage or scene upon which all is acted; and so the prophecies extend to no other kingdoms than where the church hath been. And this you may observe throughout both of them; as in the fifth seal, chap. vi., you have blessed martyrs then calling for vengeance for their blood; and under the trumpets, which are miseries upon kingdoms, there are men sealed, as being servants of God, scattered and mingled amongst those nations upon whom those trumpets blow. And the like may be observed in the following chapter. So that they extend but to such kingdoms or monarchies in the world where the church in all ages still was; therefore, not to the West Indians, nor Tartarians, nor Chinese, nor East Indians, &c., where the church hath not been, or not to any considerable purpose; not any of these kingdoms doth this prophecy concern. This likewise agrees with God's manner in the prophets, who prophesied of such kingdoms only as had to deal with his church, thereby to shew Christ's power in ruling kingdoms for his church's good.

(2.) This book being written for the comfort of his church, and all the judgments therein mentioned coming out of the throne of the temple, which is the church, and likewise upon the prayers of the church; it contains therefore the fates of such kingdoms as the church should have to do withal. Now, if so, then—

3. The third step, or proposition, is this, That the Roman monarchy, or empire, with the territories both in the east and west sea, which were under its jurisdiction, (which empire when John wrote was in its height and flourish, and with which the church had most to do, and in the jurisdiction of which the church had always been chiefly, and in a manner only seated,) must needs be, in the several revolutions and changes of it, the main subject of this book of the Revelations, together with the state of the church under it. Now this empire, and the dominions of it, was extended well-nigh as far for circuit as the dominions under the Turk in the east, and the ten European kingdoms in the west. All which, in John's time, were wholly and solely under the emperor of Rome. And in this empire, and throughout all the territories of it, did God place his church and gospel; and throughout all which the Christian profession doth remain unto this day, even in the east as well as in the west, though darkly and corruptly, and in a manner here only. This empire therefore, with its dominions, is in the New Testament called the *world*, even *all the world*, for the greatness of it; and because indeed this was the world which God had set up to act his great works upon. Thus, Luke ii. 1, 2, the whole world is said to have been taxed by Augustus; and, Acts xi. 28, there is foretold a famine that

should rage throughout all the world, in the time of Claudius Cæsar. And this world was the line, as the Apostle's phrase is, beyond whose reach the apostles' preaching never stretched to any considerable purpose. This was their chief auditory, as appears by Matt. xxiv. 14, where, before the destruction of Jerusalem, foretold ver. 15, 16, as a sign forerunning it, it is said the 'gospel should be preached to all the world;' that is, over all the dominions of the Roman empire, as it was by the apostles before the ruining of it. Now that this empire, and the territories under it, together with the church in it, should be the main subject of this book, there are these reasons for it:—

(1.) Because, as hath been said, it is the chief, and in a manner only seat of the church; which was, and still is, extended so far, and no further. And by the power of this empire, and the several successions of it, hath the church been mainly oppressed in all ages. If therefore this book-prophecy be of the church, then surely of the church under this empire; and if of the judgments upon any kingdoms for their oppression of the church, then surely upon this, for the church's sake. And if the judgments which are in this book, set out under seals, and trumpets, and vials, do come for the church's sake, and be made to fall upon her chief enemies, then they must eminently light upon this grand enemy, for such it hath been; and so, this prophecy must note out the judgments and wars that ruined the empire for its persecuting the saints, who, chap. vi. 10, do cry out for vengeance; and the trumpets are the hearing of their prayers, chap. viii. 3.

(2.) The Roman empire, and the successions of it east and west, was that fourth and great monarchy that should oppress the earth, now only left, when Christ ascended. Now, in the prophecies of the Old Testament, their main subject was the great monarchy then in being, or presently to come. So in Daniel, two or three chapters are chiefly taken up with the successions of the Grecian monarchy, and then of the Roman. And Daniel foretold that this Roman should be the most terrible of all the rest. And therefore surely God, in this prophecy of the New Testament, doth, according to his manner in the Old, lay out the fates of that fourth monarchy now only left; as he had done of those others that were gone and past ere Christ ascended.

(3.) This must needs be so, especially seeing the scope of this book is the instalment of Christ into his kingdom, and so to shew how, in the meantime, he puts down all rule that keeps it from him, and takes it to himself; so erecting a fifth monarchy, succeeding the other four. Now then, this Roman monarchy, in the several successions of it in the east and west, being the chiefest rule and power that was left on earth for Christ to put down, and which his own kingdom was immediately to succeed, it is therefore fitly made the subject of this book, to shew how he puts down the rule of it, and preserves his church under it. And so it answers yet more fully unto the like scope of Daniel's prophecy; who being to prophesy of the kingdom of Christ, chap. vii. 9, God doth first, on purpose, give him a vision of the four monarchies that were to precede that of Christ; and especially insist on the fourth, namely this of Rome, ver. 7, as being that which Christ, after his ascension, was to encounter with and put down, ere himself take the kingdom. And then he shews Daniel how Christ will ruin it, ver. 11, and then take the kingdom to himself. So that this Revelation, which is the prophecy of the New Testament, doth more largely and particularly set forth that which Daniel in the Old Testament, according to the dispensation then, saw more generally; even the ruin of the fourth monarchy, which Christ's monarchy succeeds.

(4.) That this should be the subject of this prophecy, suits also with the

chief prophecies delivered by other of the apostles in the New Testament, which were reduced to three heads:—

[1.] Foretelling the ruin of the Roman empire, which, 2 Thess. ii., Paul calls a taking out of the way him that lets.

[2.] The discovery of the Pope, (who is the last head of that last fourth monarchy,) and his ruin.

[3.] The kingdom of Christ to succeed.

These three things were ordinarily preached by the apostles, as appears plainly by 2 Thess. ii. 2–9, where Paul, having spoken of these three things, says, ver. 5, 'Remember you not, that, when I was with you, I told you these things?' So that the apostles did certainly tell the churches of these three things, which surely, therefore, are the main subject of this prophecy also, but they are more largely delivered unto John. Wherefore this Revelation may answerably be divided into these three parts:—

First, The story of the Roman empire, and the taking of it out of the way, which is the subject of the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters of this book.

Secondly, The discovery of the man of sin, and his ruin, chap. xiii. 14–19.

Thirdly, Christ's coming and kingdom, chap. xx., xxi.

4. Now then, the fourth and last consideration shall be spent in an inquiry after the difference of the subjects of these two prophecies, the seal and book-prophecy. For in this Roman empire, and the several successions and revolutions of it, there are these two things to be considered in the story thereof:—

(1.) The empire, or political body, and the state thereof.

(2.) The church under it, and the state and condition thereof.

And therefore some writers have written the ecclesiastical story, or story of the church in all ages, apart by itself. Others have writ the story of the empire, and its several revolutions. As among us here in England, (to give you this instance only for an illustration,) the *Book of Martyrs* is chiefly a story of church affairs, and the conflicts of it with Antichrist, in England; but *Speed's Chronicle* is chiefly a story of the affairs civil falling out in that kingdom, in the several invasions, wars, conquests, and intestine broils of it. Now the like method hath the Holy Ghost been pleased to observe in this prophetical story of this empire, and the church spread through the territories and dominions of it. These two prophecies before mentioned, namely the seal and book-prophecy, do share these two between them. The one does apart contain, more particularly, the several wars, events, and revolutions of the empire itself; and that is the seal-prophecy. And the other, which is the book-prophecy, contains the several conditions and states of the church of Christ in all ages. Now this difference of the subjects of those two prophecies doth appear in the several characters, and in the very place and situation of the visions themselves.

First, The differing shows or faces of the visions in these representations do argue this difference: for in the first prophecy, you read of seven seals, and four horses, chap. vi., and then of trumpets, chap. viii. and ix., noting sometimes sealed judgments and devastations by plagues, famines, and wars; of which latter, trumpets are in all nations the signal and symbols, and in Scriptures used to signify wars; and so do note out the several judgments by conquests, and devastations by war, brought upon the civil state of the empire. But in the book-prophecy, the chief actors are women; fit emblems of the church. Thus, chap. xii., it speaks of a *woman with child*, ready to be delivered; and, chap. xiv., of *virgins*, free from her fornications; then of a *whore*, representing the false church, chap. xvii. and xviii.; and then, chap.

xix., of a *bride*, preparing and prepared, personating the state of the church, when Christ shall come to fetch her, and bed her everlastingly in his Father's house and kingdom. Thus artificial is the Holy Ghost in handling things of differing nature apart.

Secondly, answerably, the differing situation and place which these two prophecies had do shew this. The seals which contain the prophecies of the empire were on *the back-side*, as containing matters *extra ecclesiam*, without the church; but the book itself contains things *within*, even as the church is said to be within, 1 Cor. v. 12, 'For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?' Whereas those that are not of the church are said to be without, Rev. xxii. 15, 'For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.' And so the prophecy thereof is cast to be, as it were, *without* the book, even upon the seals of it; as denoting that the seal-prophecy treats of things outward, and of the temporal state of the church: whereas the book-prophecy treats of spiritual things within the church. And as in the general division this appears, so it will appear in the interpretation of all particulars throughout this book; for John puts things of a sort together, as the best historians use to do. Only take this caution along with you: that neither in the one nor the other of these prophecies, the things of the empire or the church are so handled apart as that nothing at all of the church affairs were handled in the seal-prophecy, or that nothing of the affairs of the empire were mentioned in the book-prophecy. But it is so to be understood as that eminently the ecclesiastical story is contained in the one, and the imperial story in the other. For as in the books of Kings and Chronicles, though the first does more eminently and setly contain the story of the kings of Israel, yet so as matters of Judah are withal intermingled; and again, in the story of Judah, Israel's affairs are interwoven; even so is it here. Some things appertaining to the church are scatteredly mentioned in the prophecy concerning the empire; and some things touching the empire are diffused through the prophecy of the church, or the book-prophecy.

Now briefly then to sum up all this book:—

It is a tragi-comical vision of the occurrences of the world, and of the church in the world, through all times and ages; whereof this may truly be the title, 'The story of Christ's kingdom, and the removal of the several difficulties of his coming to it.'

Chap. iv.—The stage for this is set up in chap. iv., where there is a representation of the universal church in all ages, set forth according to the exact pattern of a church visible and instituted; into which all saints on earth should be cast.

Chap. v.—Then enters the prologue, chap. v., in which is set forth Christ's taking upon him the kingdom and government, by taking the sealed book; as thereby shewing he undertaketh to be God's commissioner, to execute the decrees contained in this book, and to give the vision of it unto John. At which instalment of him into his kingdom, there is a song of praise sung to the Lamb, by the four-and-twenty elders and four beasts, who are the chorus in this show, with a triumphing assurance and expectation of what will be the happy conclusion of all; even our reigning on earth with him, say they there.

Now the scene or place where all was to be acted, which these visions here hold forth, is the Roman empire, and the several dominions of it in the east and west, called *οἰκουμένη*, the whole world.

Then begins the story itself at chap. vi.; the general argument of which is: That whereas Christ's government was to be executed and seen, *first*, in putting down all opposite rule and power that stand in his way, as St Paul speaks, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25, 'Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power: for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet;' and, *secondly*, in a visible taking the kingdom to himself and his saints, which makes the fifth monarchy: accordingly here the story of this book—

1. Shews how Christ doth put down all the opposite rule, and power, and dominion, whatsoever, in the fourth and last foregoing monarchy of the Romans, in the several successions and revolutions of it, one after another, till that he hath worn them all out that were ordained to stand up in it. And these many difficulties of his coming to and obtaining his kingdom do exceedingly serve to make the story of it appear the more glorious. Then—

2. It closeth and endeth in a glorious visible kingdom which Christ sets up on earth, and peaceably possesseth together with his saints, as the catastrophe of all.

More particularly the story is this, according to the several contents of each chapter:—

Christ when he ascended up to heaven, found the Roman monarchy, whose room he was to possess, stretched both over east and west, even over all those parts of the world where he was to seat his church and kingdom; and all this wholly in the hands, and under the dominion and power of one monarch or emperor; under whose government all that were subjected were altogether heathenish and idolatrous, and wholly brought under the power of Satan, who was set up therein as the 'god of this world.'

Hereupon, Christ, the designed king, first sets upon the conquest of Satan's dominion and worship in it; and by the preaching of the gospel, overturns that vast empire as heathenish, throws down Satan from his throne and height of glory in it, and brings it into subjection and acknowledgment of himself as king; and turns both it and its emperors to Christianity, within the space of three hundred years. This is the sum and mind of the 6th chapter of the seal-prophecy, and likewise of the 12th chapter of the book-prophecy.

But this empire, though wholly turned Christian in outward profession, yet having persecuted his church whilst idolatrous, and also after it was Christian, when Arian, therefore at the prayers of the martyrs slain, mentioned chap. vi. 9, and in vengeance of their blood, he further proceeds to ruin the civil imperial power of the empire itself, by the trumpets in the 8th and 9th chapters. And the empire then becoming divided into two parts, the eastern and western empire, as they were commonly called, first he ruins the imperial western state and power in Europe, by the four first trumpets, the wars of the *Goths*, by four several steps, in the 8th chapter; and then the imperial eastern state, which stood after the other, and this by two degrees—first, by the *Saracens*, then by the *Turks*, (and these two are the fifth and sixth trumpets,) which two possess all that eastern part unto this day. And this is the contents of the 9th chapter only. Before these trumpets bring these evils upon the empire, he seals up a company of a hundred and forty-four thousand Christians in the eastern part, as chap. vii. 2, to be preserved and continued in the true profession of his name, under these two sorest and longest (and there called the *woe, woe*) trumpets, which were to fall upon the eastern part of the empire, in which these servants of his there sealed were to be; as appears by chap. *vii.* 4. And this their sealing is the sum of the seventh chapter.

Now then, that old Roman empire, as under those emperors, being thus in both parts of it removed; yet still, as that eastern part of it is left possessed by the Turks, chap. ix., so this western part of it, in Europe, being by the Goths broken into ten kingdoms, they all consented to give their power to the *beast*, the Pope, chap. xiii., who so becomes a successor to the western emperors, and possesseth their seat and power, though under another title, and so heals that wound given to the Roman monarchy, and restores it. And this beast the 13th chapter describes, and gives the vision of his rise, power, and time of his reign, which the 17th chapter doth expound and interpret.

Under whose antichristian tyranny, as great as that of the Turks themselves towards Christians, Christ yet preserveth another like company, of 'one hundred forty and four thousand virgins,' who are in like manner sealed, Christians, in the west, (as, under the tyranny of the Turks and Saracens, he had done the like in the east, chap. vii.,) himself so keeping possession still, by preserving his church under both these parts of the empire, as being his inheritance. And this company of a hundred and forty-four thousand Christians, opposite to the whore, are there called virgins; and their separation from her, and opposition to her, is recorded in chap. xiv.

But now these two, the Pope and Turk, both enemies to Christ, thus succeeding in the empire and sharing the two parts of it between them, we see that Jesus Christ is still as far off from his kingdom designed him, which is to be set up in these territories, as he was before; for Mohammedanism, under the Turk, tyranniseth in the one, and idolatry, under the Pope, overspreads the other, even as heathenism had done over the whole empire at first. And so Christ hath a new business of it yet, to come unto his kingdom, and as difficult as ever.

Therefore he hath seven *vials*, which contain the last plagues, (for he means to make this the last act of this long tragi-comedy,) to despatch the Pope and the Turk, and wholly root them out, even as the seals had done heathenism, and the trumpets had done the civil power of the empire; and the plagues of these vials are the contents of the 15th and 16th chapters.

The first five vials do dissolve, and by degrees ruin the Pope's power in the west; then the sixth vial breaks the power of the Turk in the east, so making way for the Jews, (whom he means to bring into the fellowship of his kingdom in their own land,) there called 'the kings of the east.'

But by these six vials their power and kingdom being not wholly ruined, both the Turkish and Popish party do together join, using their utmost forces (and together with them all opposite kings of the whole world) against the Christians, both of the east and west, who, when the Jews are come in and converted, do make up a mighty party in the world; unto the help of whom, against those and all opposite power whatsoever, Christ himself comes and makes but one work of it, with his own hand from heaven destroying them. And so it is done, as the voice of the last vial is, in the 16th chapter.

The 17th chapter is an interpretation concerning the *beast*, shewing who he is, and where his seat is.

The 18th chapter sings a funeral song of triumph for the whore's ruin, which is the fifth vial; after which comes in Christ's kingdom, the New Jerusalem, and the preparations to it; which new kingdom of his shall be made up—

1. Of eastern Christians, who endured the bondage of the two woe-trumpets, the Saracens and the Turks, yet continuing to profess his name. And

therefore unto those hundred and forty-four thousand in the 7th chapter is said to succeed an innumerable company, with 'palms in their hands,' who have the very same promises of the New Jerusalem made to them that are mentioned in the 21st chapter, which shews their interest therein. And—

2. It is made up of western Christians, whose hundred and forty-four thousand, in chap. xiv., do arise to an innumerable company also; who therefore, after the rejection of the whore, chap. xix. 1–9, are brought in singing in like triumphant manner, decking themselves for the marriage in fine linen. But—

3. And especially, it is also to be made up of Jews dispersed both east and west, and over all the world; and from them hath this kingdom the name of the New Jerusalem. With whom—

4. Come in, as attendants of their joy, other Gentiles too, who never had received Christ before. The 'glory of the Gentiles' is said to be brought into it.

And so both east and west, Jew and Gentile, and the fulness of both, do come in, and become one fold under one shepherd for a thousand years, and one kingdom under this 'Root of David,' their king, King Jesus the conqueror, even as it first was under one heathen idolatrous emperor, when Christ had first set to conquer it. And so that prophecy of this his kingdom, in Isa. lix. 19, is fulfilled, where, after the final destruction of all Christ's enemies, foretold ver. 18, he says, 'They shall fear his name, from the east unto the west, and the Redeemer shall come unto Sion;' which words Paul interprets of the Jews' final call, and this restauration of the world with them, Rom. xi. 26.

Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

CHAPTER IV.

Of the first six seals in the 6th chapter.

HAVING thus given a scheme and division of the whole prophecy, and a general argument of the story of it, briefly set together in one view, I will now run over each chapter apart; yet I shall largely insist only on the 6th chapter, as being taken off by other occasions from commenting so copiously, with observations, upon the rest, which I shall pass over with a more slight glance of interpretation, as hastening to the Second Part, which I more especially aim at; which, although it arise not to a full and copious commentary, shall, notwithstanding, serve to hold forth that to be the true portrait of the Holy Ghost's mind in this story, which in the general argument foregoing I have given it out to be.

The *seal-prophecy* concerns the state of the empire from John's time downward. Which state, as all story will represent unto you, is to be considered, either—

1. Whilst heathenish, when false gods were worshipped, as Jupiter, Mars, &c., and the professors of Christian religion were persecuted and massacred; during all which time the empire stood whole, undivided, and entire, under the government of one emperor, under whom both east and west were subjected, and this for the space of three hundred years after Christ. Or else—

2. When turned Christian, as by Constantine it was; from whose time the whole empire more generally was subjected to the outward profession of Christ; but withal, it began to be divided and broken into two parts: which rent was afterwards established by Theodosius, the eastern part of Europe (whereof Constantine made Byzantium, from him called Constantinople, the seat) being allotted to one emperor, which eastern part the Turk now possesseth; and the western part, which had Rome for the seat of it, unto another, which western part the Pope for many hundred years hath entirely had under him; so that the one was called the eastern, and the other the western empire. And according to this division, the seal-prophecy divides itself into two parts:—

First, The first six seals, chap. vi.

Secondly, The first six trumpets, which the seventh seal brings forth in the 8th and 9th chapters; from the woe of which trumpets the servants of God are sealed, chap. vii.

Here, in the 6th chapter, the first prophecy begins, and that with the primitive times; of which these two things are evidences:—

1. That in the first seal is the 'going forth'—the preaching of the gospel—'conquering, and to conquer;' for as then, and in that manner, it had begun. This was the foundation of all God's after-proceedings, the first corner-stone of Christ's obtaining and setting up his kingdom.

2. That the fifth seal mentions the martyrdom of saints, crying out for vengeance; which being the first mention of any such martyrdom in this

book, must needs refer to those famous first persecutions under heathenish Rome, which was followed by the Arian a little after; as ver. 11.

These six seals are several steps and degrees, setting forth the moving causes and means of God's plaguing and ruining the empire of Rome as heathenish. Christ being to put down all adverse power, he finds not only this empire to stand in his way, but Gentilism, the worship of false gods, and of Satan, under those idols of Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, &c. First therefore he encounters Satan's worship, heathenism, which had all the power of that empire to back it; and then in the trumpets he encounters the empire itself: he 'went forth conquering, and to conquer,' and that but by degrees. The first judgments on that empire left the empire standing. Therefore, the martyrs, after those punishments foregone, in the second, third, and fourth seal, do yet (seal fifth) cry for vengeance on the empire itself.

They are called *seals*—

1. In a general relation to this whole prophecy; it being—

(1.) A book of decrees to be executed by Christ, and these are the seals of them.

(2.) This book being not to be opened till the time of the end, as Daniel foretold, is sealed up till just before the end of all; as there it is prophesied, Dan. xii. 4, 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.' Towards this end of all you have (mark this) the same angel in Dan. xii. coming in the 10th chapter of this Revelation, with a book in his hand open; which as it was to give a new prophecy, so to shew that when all the seals were off, (that is, when these judgments were all executed on the world,) then the book should be understood; and accordingly, not till all these seals were passed, was the Revelation understood.

2. More particularly they are called *seals*, because—

(1.) They are judgments decreed by God, that should certainly come upon that empire. Now what is decreed inevitably is said to be *sealed*. So the salvation of the elect is said to be, 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.' So also judgments decreed are said to be *sealed*, Deut. xxxii. 34, 'Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?' even to punish them; for so it follows, 'to me belongeth vengeance,' &c. Thus, Job xiv. 17, 'My transgression,' says he, 'is sealed up in a bag;' that is, God had before appointed surely to punish it.

(2.) They are said to be sealed, in that they are judgments hidden, stealing in upon the world ere they were aware of them, and which they knew not the meaning of. And accordingly we find, by the Apologies of Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, and others, that the heathenish Romans, observing such strange, unheard-of famines, civil wars, and plagues of pestilence, typified out here by the red, black, and pale horses, did exceedingly wonder at the reason of them, and laid it on the new sect of the Christians, as with whom their gods were angry for contemning their worship; for it was never so with them before, and therefore they attributed it to that cause. These judgments were sealed, and Christ here opens the cause of them, the contempt of the gospel.

(3.) They are sealed judgments, for pledges and assurance of all that follow. That is the use of seals, to give assurance; for that end is the seal of the Spirit. And so here, there being other things in this prophecy foretold, as the ruin of the empire itself, the rising of Antichrist and of the Turk, the ruin of them both by the seven vials, and then Christ's kingdom; that all

these things should certainly come to pass in their time, God first sent these judgments as *seals:* that as we read in story the truth of these to be evidently fulfilled, so we may assure ourselves of the accomplishing all the other.

Obs.—Observe from this general, a ground of confirming your faith about all these things prophesied of by God; in that the fulfilling of one is a seal, assuring that the other shall be fulfilled. That heathenism is ruined, and no adorers of those pagan gods left, as this chapter shews, which was more firmly rooted, being of four thousand years' continuance, than ever Popery was, is a seal to us that Popery shall be ruined. You see many things past and fulfilled; the beast of Rome (the Pope), then, when John wrote this, not risen, is now up in your days; which may confirm your faith that he shall as certainly be ruined: for the same prophecy foretells his fall, chap. xviii., as his rise, chap. xiii., and that after this there is a glorious kingdom to come, of which all these are seals. You find in the 11th chapter, before the end, the temple measured anew, and the outward court of carnal worshippers and worship cast out; and you see it now in your days fulfilled; yea, yourselves fulfil it. You may therefore as certainly expect that which follows in the same chapter, and prepare for it. Thus Zechariah begins his prophecy, so to assure them of the truth of it: Did you ever know prophecy fail? 'My words,' says he, Zech. i. 6, 'did they not take hold of,' or arrest, 'your fathers?' by the judgments threatened; and 'like as the Lord thought to do unto us, so hath he dealt with us;' therefore believe the rest.

Now the four first seals are represented unto us under the vision of four horses, in allusion to the visions in Zechariah, chap. i. and vi. Christ in the 1st chapter of that book, ver. 8, is presented riding on a red horse; and behind him stood other horses, red, speckled, and white; and, ver. 10, they are interpreted to be angels, who walk to and fro through the earth; and, chap. vi. 5, to be four winds, or spirits, that go forth from standing before the Lord of the earth. So the good angels, Heb. i. 14, are called ministering spirits, sent forth, &c. Thus, Ps. civ. 3, 4, compared with Heb. i. 7, 14, and Ezek. i., where they are called winds, as in that of Zech. vi. 5. So in like manner are the evil angels sent forth to do mischief, as 1 Kings xxii. 21, and Job i. 7. The angels are the executioners of all God's great designs; and therefore whatsoever is done in this book by men is still said to be done by angels. So, chap. viii. 2, seven angels with seven trumpets, &c.

Here the vision is of horses going forth in like manner with commission from God. And this allusion to those horses, who there were angels, shews either that these executions, under these seals, by whomsoever visibly executed, were yet performed under the conduct of Christ the first horse, presented here, as also in that of Zech. i., as an angel, accompanied with other angels his followers, who are those other horses; or else, however, to shew, that as those angels upon horses in Zechariah went their circuit over the earth, so that here were commissions sealed to these executioners, to traverse and compass the earth, as angels use to do. God begins here to war with the world, and sends out four horsemen to give the first onset. That this vision is presented under horses is but for variety's sake.

The Revelation takes all the eminent visions of the Old Testament, and makes use of them. The elegancies of all the types in the prophets serve but to set forth and adorn the visions of this book; as if you should make up one beautiful picture out of all beauties, by taking whatever is elegant and excellent in any one. The vision of the throne, chap. iv., is borrowed from Isaiah and Ezekiel; that of the book sealed, from Daniel; this of horses

here, from Zechariah; and so that of the olive-trees, and candlesticks, chap. xi., from Zech. iv., &c.

Observe from hence—

Obs. 1.—The perfection of this book. It is a posy of all flowers, a vision composed out of all visions; as Solomon's Song was a song of songs. All the types in Moses' law, and all the stories and visions of the prophets, are borrowed to adorn it.

Obs. 2.—That the occurrences under the new testament, and the story of the church under it, have all the perfections of all kinds that were under the old. For in the new testament the old is more eminently acted over, in all passages of providence. Was there a temple? Here is one more glorious; this second exceeds the first. Was there an Egypt, a Sodom, a Babylon? Here also is one far worse than all those were. So Rome is called in this book, chap. xi. and xviii. Was there a restoring of the temple, decayed in the captivity of Babylon? Here is the like, and that at twice, and by degrees, as then. Had they a Jerusalem? The Revelation hath a better, a New Jerusalem. Did the bondman of old persecute the free? Even so it is now: Gal. iv. 24, 29, 'Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit; even so it is now.' We have all the same things befall us that befell them, and that more eminently; as Paul said, 'Are they apostles? I much more.' Had they persecutors? We much more, and those worse. Had they Pharisees, that sinned against the Holy Ghost and crucified Christ? So hath the new testament, such as shall, after this great conviction wrought by the gospel, prove like a generation of Pharisees, scorched with the heat of hell-fire, as in the fourth vial, and that shall kill the 'witnesses,' chap. xi. The allusion is to these times. The apostle hath said it in one word, and given the reason of it, 1 Cor. x. 11, 'All these things happened unto them for types:' so also did all their visions, being written for 'our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come;' you may read it, 'perfection of the world is come:' we have the perfection of everything under the old testament, both good and bad.

This may serve to give a general light into the stories and visions of this prophecy. As for the several visions themselves:—

The first horse is a *white* one, and his rider crowned, &c. This rider is Christ himself, 'going forth,' in the preaching of the gospel, 'conquering, and to conquer;' alluding unto Ps. xlv. 4–6, where Christ, having a kingdom to possess,—as ver. 6, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,' speaking of Christ, as appears by Heb. i. 8, 'But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom,'—he is set out in his going forth to conquer it; for he must win and wear it. And he is described as here, 'In thy majesty prosper thou, ride thou,' or ride thou prosperously, that is, go forth conquering; and that being accoutred with bow and arrows, as ver. 5, 'Thy arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies,' that is, his own enemies, who is king.

Now answerably this book also tells us that Christ was to have a kingdom; and here you have his first setting out to conquer it. The first foundation of his kingdom laid was the preaching of the gospel in the Roman empire by the apostles, which was now begun; therefore he is said to go forth conquering already. And he goes first forth; for all the other horsemen do but attend him; he is the general of these horses. Thus likewise, in Zech. i., he is described with other horses with him. And he goes forth

first on a *white* horse; which, as it was a sign of triumph, that he was to conquer,—for so in triumph their chariots were drawn with white horses,—so especially of meekness and candour, offering at first conditions of peace in the gospel, unto the empire of Rome, and to all nations, if they would submit to him as their king. God had given him the nations for his inheritance, and he goes forth peaceably to challenge it; with conditions also, that the world should yet hold their crowns of him, only turn Christians they must, and do homage to him as their king. This the colour of *white* denotes; for here it is opposed to the colour of the red horse that followed, which colour betokened blood. Thus Tamerlane, before he denounced war, first hung out a white flag, in token of peace offered. Therefore, in Ps. xlv. 4, Christ is bidden to 'ride on, because of the word of meekness;' and the progress of the gospel is compared to that of a horse and his rider, for it had its progress over the earth, from one country to another, by commission: 'Their sound went out to all the earth,' Rom. x. 18; 'Come to Macedonia, and help us,' Acts xvi. 9. His weapons to conquer, if men yield not, are here but arrows: but, chap. xix., when his conquest is to be finished, you have him with a sword. In Ps. xlv., he is described with both. The threatenings of the gospel are arrows, striking secretly and dartingly into men's hearts, and wounding them mortally; *hæret lethalis arundo.*

He is crowned; for God, when Christ first ascended, made him a king. 'We see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour; though yet we see not all things put under him,' Heb. ii. 8, 9: yet we see him crowned, for all must be subject to him.

He goes forth conquering; for whether men obey or not, Christ still conquers. Paul speaks like a conqueror, 2 Cor. ii. 14, 'God always causeth us to triumph in Christ.' For if men turn, there is a triumph of grace pardoning, and so subduing traitors; and if not, it is a savour of death, like a box of venomous ointment, which poisons by the smell.

Now if you ask, how the preaching of the gospel can be a step of ruin, and a sealed judgment, it being in itself so great a blessing?—the answer is, that it was truly a step unto the ruin of heathenism in the empire, which was the first opposite that Christ encountered. When Christ first sent his disciples forth, speaking of the event of it, he says, 'I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning.' The devil was struck dumb in his oracles when Christ began to publish his. And so Christ already conquered, in part; but ere he had done, he threw Satan out of heaven, as the sixth and last seal shews. So that though the gospel was a blessing to the world, yet it was a curse to Gentilism; as the first vial, by converting many people's hearts from Popery, is called a vial on the earth.

Observe from hence—

Obs. 1.—The mercifulness and meekness of Christ. He goes not forth first on a red horse, but on a white, and makes offer of peace; but if men turn not, he hath other horses to do that work of destroying them. He loves unbloody conquests. Who therefore would stand out against such a Saviour?

Obs. 2.—The strangeness of Christ's course to get his kingdom; even by no other means at first but preaching the word. He takes no weapons but a bow, the tongues of men, to dart arrows into the hearts of them that resist. It was a strange, unlikely course to set twelve men scattered, and fishermen, to conquer the world, the Roman empire; as if twelve men should be sent into Turkey to conquer the Great Turk, and throw down Mohammedanism: 'Not by power, nor by might, but by my Spirit,' Zech. iv. 6.

Obs. 3.—Observe, That where Christ begins to conquer, he will go on to perfect his conquest. Fear not the cause of God in England; there is a battle to be fought: Christ in his angels growing more and more holy, and fuller of light; and Satan in his growing worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. Christ comes up with fresh supplies of new light, with his bow and arrows bears up as hard as they. And it is certain that Christ will not be foiled. The primitive Christians, although their light grew dimmer and dimmer, yet they conquered heathenism. These now must needs conquer much more.

After the going forth of this white horse, there follow three others, as light horsemen, attending this their general. So, Zech. i. 8, he saw 'a man upon a red horse, and behind him were other horses, red, speckled, and white.' Now that man was Christ, ver. 8, who hath always other horsemen his attendants to fulfil his will, as here he hath. Christ there was upon a red horse, for so he appeared, as being to revenge himself on the enemies of his church; but here he is on a white horse, as being to send forth the gospel. But those other horses that do here follow after him are indeed judgments that follow for the contempt of that gospel, and which plagued the empire successively. Their colour is suitable to the plague they brought; therefore the second horse is red, a colour betokening blood, Isa. lxiii. 2. And answerably, this horse is *war*, for his commission is 'to take peace from the earth,'—that is, the Roman empire, the subject of this seal-prophecy. And civil war it is, as those words note out, that 'men should kill one another;' not persecution of the saints, as some take it, but mutual bloodshed, as that phrase imports. All which was for their contempt of the gospel. For—

1. If they take peace from the saints, it is a suitable plague that God should take peace from the earth.

2. If they will not embrace the gospel of peace, it is suitable that God should take away their peace. And—

3. If they will kill the saints, is it not a proportioned judgment that God should turn their swords into their own bowels?

And this power is said to be 'given him.' It proceeded from a commission from God; and so was a 'sword given him.' God puts the sword into an enemy's hand, and gives it its commission. As magistrates do bear God's sword, so soldiers; who therefore, in the prophets, are often called God's sword. Now, how after the preaching of the gospel in the apostles' time, such wars fell upon the empire in the west is most evident in story; nor are there greater civil wars mentioned than in the Roman stories. John wrote his Revelation just before Trajan's time, in the reign of Domitian, about the year of Christ 94, and died in 104, ten years after. Now in Trajan's time, in whose sixth year John died, these wars began. And so then, when the apostles were all dead, and had preached the gospel to the world, the Jews rise, and with armies raged through all the parts of the empire; and so devastated and depopulated Lybia of her inhabitants, that Hadrian was afterwards forced to send thither new colonies. About Cyrene they destroyed 22,000; in Egypt also, and in Cyprus, 24,000; and in Mesopotamia likewise a great number. And Hadrian afterwards succeeding in the empire, destroyed 58,000 of them. Then after Trajan's time, the Parthians revolt, and the empire was lessened, having in his time had the largest extent. And in Antoninus's time, anno 140, all the northern nations came down upon the east, and upon all Illyricum; yet they, as a land-flood, were dried up; so that the empire stood entire. And that these wars might

be the more eminently taken notice of, as following upon the apostles' deaths, as they had none before, so for forty-four years after this there was a universal peace, and wars ceased through the empire.

The third horse is *famine;* his colour, answerably, *black*, for famine makes men's countenances such. So, Lam. iv. 6, 7, 'Her Nazarites, that were purer than snow, and more ruddy than rubies, their visage is blacker than a coal;' and this by reason of famine, as appears by ver. 9. His rider hath scales in his hand, to shew that he sells corn by weight, not by measure;—as, Lev. xxvi. 26, 'When I have broken the staff of your bread, women shall deliver you your bread by weight;' and a small quantity of corn, even so much as serves a man in bread for a day, for so the chœnix was, was sold for a penny, which amounts to 7½d.;—yet with commission not to hurt the oil and the wine. Now because historians are silent concerning any notable famine and universal, that fell out in the next age after these wars in the Roman empire, therefore Mr Mede carries it to the justness of those emperors, signified by the balances, which in Severus and others was eminent; especially in laws against thieves, and in public provision for corn. But this was heterogeneal to the rest, which are all steps to the ruining or plaguing of the heathenish empire. And for the Holy Ghost to take notice of a moral virtue, and to insert it thus among the midst of his judgments, I cannot be induced to believe it. But this scarcity being not of oil and wine, but of corn only, might well be slipt over by historians; when yet the Christians of that age, as Tertullian and others, do mention a famine of corn as a judgment on the empire for their contempt of Christ, and their persecuting of the saints. I have searched diligently for such footsteps in them of that age, 200 years after Christ and upwards, as might confirm the truth of this.

And, first, I find, that in Commodus's time, anno 190, there was a commotion made for bread, within the city of Rome, by the poorer sort. Thus says Herodian, *fames Romanos afflixit*, the Romans were afflicted by reason of famine and scarcity: when Cleander, Commodus's great favourite, detained the corn from the common people, he being keeper of the storehouse of it; upon which they mutiny, requiring him to be put to death; and proceeding further in their rage, they throw down houses, oppose the soldiers, stone the captains, &c., so that Commodus was enforced to cut off his favourite's head, and set it upon a pole, and to destroy his children also, so to pacify the people. Yea, in those very words which Mr Mede quotes for Severus's justice, and care about oil, &c., there is an intimation of the exhausture of the corn of the public storehouse through that famine. The words are these, *Rei frumentariæ quam minimam reperiebat; ita consuluit*, &c. So likewise there is such an intimation in that other place which he quotes for Alexander Severus's care, anno 118, which only was occasioned by Heliogabalus's having overthrown the public stock of corn; *frumenta evertisset.*

Then, secondly, for the Christian writers of these times: Tertullian, who lived in anno 203, doth more confirm this; for in his Apology for the Christians, he brings in this calumny as usual among the heathens, that they laid the cause of all their miseries upon the Christians. His words are these: *Si cœlum stetit*, &c.,—if it rained not, if Nilus overflowed not Egypt, (which was the granary of the empire,) from whence arose a famine, or if the pestilence devoured them, &c.,—*statim*, says he, they cried, *Christianos ad leones:* Away with these Christians to the lions! I observe, he instanceth most in famine, and the causes of it, as being that which then they

were most punished with. And he, in his Apology, pleading for Christians, how they fasted in times of judgments, he instanceth in that of famine only, saying, 'If famine be threatened by want of rain, so that their *annona*,' or provision of corn, as De la Cerda reads it, 'were in danger to be spent, that then they Christians fast, whilst other Romans pour themselves out to all licentiousness.' It is observable that he still instanceth in the judgment of famine. And in his Apology to Scapula, the African president, he, shewing that no city that persecuted the Christians did go unpunished, instanceth how lately, under Hilarian's presidentship, his predecessor, the Christians begging a floor of corn, a voice was heard from under-ground, saying, *Areæ non sunt.* And indeed they were not, for they had no harvest nor corn the next year to thresh in them, it being spoiled through a great wet in the time of harvest, as he there says. And you, says he, condemning a Christian to the beasts, *statim hæc vexatio subsecuta est;* which Baronius understands of that wet year before spoken of, which brought ruin to the corn.

But Origen speaks more clearly to this, who, presently after, (about 226 years after Christ,) writing upon Matt. xxiv., and taking occasion to answer the same calumny objected so generally against the Christians by the heathens,—namely, that because of the multitude of Christians among them, they had been vexed with wars, famine, and pestilence,—although he reckons up all those three plagues as objected, yet to make it good that the heathens did so object, he especially instanceth in famine: *Frequenter enim*, says he, *famis causa Christianos cultores culparunt Gentiles;*—'For the heathens oftentimes laid the fault of their being afflicted by famine upon those of the Christian religion.' Though they did so because of other plagues also, yet they often laid their famines in the dish of the Christians; which evidently argues this punishment to have been very frequent in those times, as being taken notice of by the heathens themselves, and also by Origen, to have been the eminent punishment of that age, which made up the third seal.

Now then, the fourth seal produceth a fourth horse, and that a *pale* one, for his rider is death; *mors pallida*, pale death, as they use to call it. And this horse brings death upon the fourth part of the empire, called the earth, and his work was to kill with all sorts of death, both plague, and famine, and wars, and wild beasts; all God's plagues let loose at once. Before, civil wars came alone, and famine came alone; but now, for their impenitency, he lets loose all four judgments mentioned in Ezek. xiv. 21. God now brings forth all his 'treasures of wrath.' Pestilence is here, ver. 8, called death, as it is likewise by the Chaldee paraphrase and the Greek; and by the fathers it is called mortality, as by us the sickness. Now, from the year 240 after Christ, it is wonderful to read what a stage of misery and blood the empire was made, by reason of all these plagues raging at once. Civil wars so raged, that, in the space of thirty-three years, there were ten emperors killed. Under Gallus and Volusianus, anno 250, the barbarous nations came down upon the empire and harrowed it; and among them the Scythians, from whose rage no place under the Roman jurisdiction was exempt, but almost all towns were by them depopulated. And this was followed by an extreme famine. When we had a breathing time from them, then came the greatest plague of pestilence, worse than all the former, says Dionysius Alexandrinus, who lived in those times; the greatest plague, says Lypsius, that ever was read of in any age, a plague of fifteen years' continuance. And to add the last hand for the making the misery of those times complete, God let loose thirty tyrants at once, who, as so many wild beasts, preyed upon and made havoc of the empire.

Now to come to some observations:—

Obs. 1.—Take notice, that after the going forth of the white horse, then go forth these other three. The gospel is always followed by terrible judgments upon the world for the contempt of it. You know what Peter says, 'The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God;' but it will not rest there, as he says. The time of the gospel's preaching was a time of judgment, which began with the church, but after that fell most heavy upon the empire, and upon the heathens in it. So that as you look for storms in autumn and frosts in winter, so expect judgments where the gospel has been preached; for the quarrel of the covenant must be avenged and vindicated. If men despise it, God cannot hold his hands.

Use.—Wonder not, therefore, if God go over all the churches in judgments, as he hath done by Germany, Bohemia, &c. They had the gospel first, and so the cup of tribulation first; but God will visit the rest in their order, and, it may be, that of Holland last, because they have had the gospel but a little while.

Obs. 2.—Observe, That God useth to rise higher and higher in his judgments. He began with civil wars; and they not working, he sent famine, which is worse; and then war, as Lam. iv. 9; and then he came upon them with the pestilence and all the other three at once: which agrees with that in Lev. xxvi. 24, 'If you repent not, I will punish you seven times worse.' So in the trumpets, the three last are the woe-trumpets. And so in the vials too, God will rise higher and higher, as here he does.

Obs. 3.—Observe, That all plagues have their commission from God; they go forth only when Christ openeth a seal. Of the second it is said, 'Power was given him, and a sword.' And so to the third a commission of restraint was given, not to hurt the oil and wine. And to the fourth, only to kill the fourth part. They are therefore compared to horses sent forth, that are guided by riders; God's providence to direct them, and have their way chalked out, as the Egyptian plagues had. Ps. lxxviii. 50, it is called 'a path made for his anger,' chalked out where it should go, and into what houses. So, Jer. xv. 2, 'Those that are for the sword, to the sword; and those that are for the famine, to the famine,' &c. Now in all these circuits of God's judgments, let us wait for his turning towards us in mercy. 'In the way of thy judgments have we waited for thee.'

Obj.—And whereas it may be objected, that these are plagues that were ever common in the world, and in all times as well as these,—for answer, these considerations made these plagues then more eminently to be set down:—

1. They were as eminent in the Roman empire in those first ages as in any other afterwards.

2. Though the empire had such plagues in after-times also, yet these were all the plagues which it had whilst heathenish, and so were proper punishments of their Gentilism, and contempt of the message of the white horse, and so intended by God, and therefore brought in here as such. Neither did these at all ruin the empire, which stood unbroken, but simply punished it for its idolatry. But such plagues as fell out after these had other effects accompanying them, even the ruin of the imperial government, by dividing it, lessening it, and the like; which these did not. But—

3. And more especially, the Holy Ghost doth mention these plagues here, although the like were in other ages, as punishments attending upon the gospel, because this was the very observation and objection that the heathens of those times made: that since the Christian religion began in the empire, wars, pestilence, and famine raged more than ever they did in former times;

and so laid it upon the Christians as the cause, in that they, contemning the gods, provoked them to send these plagues. This we find to be the main complaint and calumny which the Christian writers of those times writ Apologies to wipe off; as appears in Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, &c., whose Apologies I purposely read, and found these judgments to be most frequently taken notice of by the heathens themselves, and this calumny by the forementioned authors answered. Yea, Cyprian, in his Apology, says, that to wipe off this calumny was the sole motive and occasion that put him upon writing. 'I held my peace,' says he, 'till they laid all these plagues upon us, as the cause of all.' Now, how properly, therefore, did the Lord Christ single out those eminent plagues following the gospel, and present them under these seals, as the most notable occurrent punishments of those times, rather than any other!

And how fitly are they called seals, seeing they were so hidden that the heathens were utterly mistaken in the causes of them! For they being punishments of their persecuting the saints, they turned the matter clean contrary, and imputed it to the anger of the gods for the Christians' contemning their heathenish religion. But though they were hidden sealed plagues, in respect of the causes of them, to the heathens, yet the four beasts did then instruct John, who personates the church, and so the church in him, concerning the true cause of them; and therefore every seal hath a voice of one or other of the beasts, saying, 'Come up and see.' For the officers or ministers of churches instructed them how that all these plagues were from the gospel, and the contempt of it, and their persecuting the professors of it. This you may read in the Apologies of Tertullian, Arnobius, and Cyprian, whose Apology I will instance in for all the rest; who, as he lived under the fourth seal, in the rage of these four plagues, so he speaks in the very language of the fourth seal. He writes against one Demetrianus, who had long barked at Christian profession. And, says he, I forbore till he laid to our charge that all these miseries on the empire we Christians were the cause of: *Cum dicas plurimos conqueri, quod bella crebriùs surgant, quod lues, et fames sæviant, ultra tacere non oportet;*—'When I hear you say that many complain of us as the causes why those wars so often arise, and why the pestilence and famine rage so, I can be no longer silent, but must needs give you an answer;' and he plainly declares, from the Lord of hosts, that their idolatries and persecutions of the Christians were the cause, and that these punishments *non eveniebant casu*, came not by chance, but were the vengeance of God, who hath said that 'vengeance is his,' and that he will judge the cause of his people. And he withal tells them, that if they repent not through these plagues, hell would then follow. *Manet postmodum*, says he, *carcer æternus, jugis flamma, et pœna perpetua;*—'There remains, after all this, an eternal prison, a continual flame, and an everlasting punishment.' He speaks in the very language of this fourth seal, not knowing it, nor referring to it, for he lived under it.

Thus doth Tertullian also in his Apology, wherein he attributes the cause of their famine and other plagues unto their persecuting the Christians. And this is the mystery of the four beasts calling upon John to 'come and see,' and behold the mind and meaning of these judgments on the world; the officers of churches in their sermons so instructed them.

Obs.—The only observation I shall raise from this instruction of the four beasts is this: That during the first four seals, which indeed bring us to two hundred and sixty years after Christ, the officers of churches remained according to the institution in the purer churches; but afterwards you hear

not of them, corruptions coming in upon all the churches, and perverting their right institution and end. You meet not with any more mention of them till the vials begin, chap. xv., which was in the first separation from Popery; and then you read not that all four, but only one of the beasts gave those vials. But after a second measuring the temple before Rome's ruin, as chap. xi., you read of four beasts, chap. xix., in their right order again, praising God.

The fifth seal is that great and bloody persecution which followed after all these plagues in the time of Diocletian, about the year 300, which was, of all the ten persecutions foregoing it, the greatest, and therefore is put in for all the rest. Under it, there suffered one hundred and forty-four thousand in one province of the empire; how many, therefore, in the rest? Now this last is here mentioned instead of all the rest—

1. Because indeed those other plagues, for the contempt of the gospel, did but enrage the heathens the more; for they thought that all this came upon them for their suffering the Christians to live.

2. This, being the last and greatest, is brought in as crying for vengeance in the name of all the foregoing martyrs; for so their cry intimates, 'How long, Lord, wilt thou not avenge our blood?'

The vision is—

1. Of souls severed from their bodies, even of men slain, or of martyrs.

2. These men are presented as new sacrificed, and with their throats cut, lying bleeding at the foot of the altar, alluding to the sacrifices, for martyrdom is no other than a sacrifice. 2 Tim. iv. 6, 'For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand;' and Phil. ii. 17, 'Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.' And whereas many understand this altar to be heaven, that comes in afterward, when white robes are given them. It is an allusion to the altar of burnt-offerings whereon their bodies were offered; but, chap. viii., their prayers are offered up upon the altar of incense.

3. They are presented as crying for vengeance for their blood. Mark it, it is not simply the blood that cries, as it is said of Abel's blood, but the souls themselves that cry, and that for vengeance and utter ruin on the empire. A Lapide makes it *liberationem*, so the Hebrew word signifies; and so *vindicare* is to *free*, as praying for the liberty of the church below. But these cries are in the behalf of their own blood already shed, and for that there was no such liberty to be sued for.

The satisfaction to their cry is double:—

1. A reason why vengeance is delayed; they had brethren to be made perfect as they were.

2. In the meantime they are received to glory.

1. For the reason; it consists in this, that the empire was yet a while to stand in power, because they had other brethren to be perfected as well as they, after a little season. So that it refers not to the persecutions of Antichrist, which were a thousand years after, but to those of Arianism, when, under those emperors, as cruel persecutions, for the time, were raised some thirty years after this as ever before; and then the trumpets sound, and they ruin the empire itself through their prayers, as chap. viii.

2. For their glory; it is expressed by *white robes* given them. Which is—

(1.) A sign or badge of heavenly glory; so, chap. iii. 4, 'They shall walk with me in white.' So Christ, when he gave a shine of the glory of his kingdom, he caused his garments to look as white as any fuller could make them.

(2.) It denotes joy. In triumphs, they were wont to wear white robes, as a token of gladness; 'Let thy garments be always white.'

(3.) Robes were worn only by noble personages. *Mulier stolata* was differenced from *togata*, as calling for a more special honour. Thus Mordecai was apparelled in the royal robes, Esth. vi. 11.

This giving them white robes is an allusion to the bringing the priests first into the temple when their thirty years were expired; they clothed them in white.

Obs. 1.—In that this persecution was the last and greatest of all, take notice that it is God's manner to bring sorest trials just before deliverance. So to David at Ziklag, a few hours before he was proclaimed king. In chap. xi. there is a persecution and war of Antichrist yet to come, for the space of three years and a half, when for ever the witnesses shall cast off their sackcloth. I fear it, for it is the last.

Obs. 2.—That though great punishments had befallen the empire by those three horses, yet this is not vengeance enough for martyrs' blood, which nothing will slack but the ruin of that kingdom and state which shed it. This punishment, therefore, is brought in after all the other. So Manasseh's bloodshed nothing would pacify but the captivity and ruin of that state.

Obs. 3.—That in a business wherein many ages have an interest, the saints in the last age foregoing do put up their prayers in the strength of all prayers and cries of blood preceding. So do these theirs in the name of all foregoing martyrs; 'How long,' &c. That as in a generation of wicked men the last of them do inherit the sins and punishments of all their forefathers, so do a generation of godly men go forth against their persecutors in the strength of all their forefathers' prayers and bloodshed. How comfortably, therefore, may we pray against Rome and Spain, and the abettors of them, the bishops, who all have even wallowed in the blood of the saints, and against whom we have the prayers of all ages to join their forces to ours for the more sure prevailing; and we may justly cry in the strength of them, 'How long,' &c. I have seen many cords so linked together upon a pulley, and with such an artifice, that a child might draw up a mighty weight, for he pulled in the strength of all the cords. So here, though we be weak, yet praying in the strength of all the saints' prayers, and of their blood, we must needs be heard. It is but a little resting till our brethren, (it may be ourselves,) the witnesses, are killed; and then down goes Rome, and the hierarchy with it. In this respect, it is good living in the last ages of the world, for we drive a trade with all our forefathers' stock.

Obs. 4.—That the power of persecutors stands no longer than till they have finished the great work of persecuting the saints. The empire stood so long as it did mainly for this end, and therefore this reason is here given. Thus, Hab. i. 12, 'Thou hast ordained them for judgment' on themselves, 'and established them for correction' of thine. We think much that they should have so great power; why, they have it to this end, to persecute.

Obs. 5.—That the souls themselves are here said to cry, and not their blood only. A wicked man being murdered, his blood calls for vengeance; but not only the blood of a godly man, but his soul also calls and cries for vengeance; which cry must therefore needs come up with much clamour in the ears of the Lord of hosts. Think you that he will not avenge his elect? Yes, he will do it speedily. And from hence raise up your thoughts higher, that if Abel's blood hath a force in its cry, and his soul, that still lives, a greater force; then how much more hath Christ's blood, and how much more yet hath Christ himself, who liveth to make intercession for us! Thus

the Scripture riseth in expressing the efficacy of the intercession of Jesus Christ for us.

Obs. 6.—That the souls in heaven, following their interests on earth, they prosecute the revenging of their blood. There is the same reason for other interests; as for friends, for children, for businesses, and the like; which having prayed for on earth, they still do prosecute them in heaven.

Obs. 7.—That the souls in paradise know the reason of God's dispensations and his counsels, which are satisfactory to them. God here opens his utmost reason why the empire was as yet to stand; and that was, to kill a few more martyrs. They are guided by a spirit of prophecy, as Christ is, they being prophets as well as priests.

Obs. 8.—That in all dispensations, if we knew what reason God hath for them, we should rest. So the souls do in this standing of the empire. Let our faith apprehend that God hath a reason for what he does, otherwise we should have no persecutions.

Obs. 9.—That saints that were not yet born are called their *brethren*, as being such in God's election. This persecution came not till forty years after. So Christ calls all his people brethren, God having given them unto him before all worlds. He knows perfectly who are his, and their number in all ages; and chose not qualifications, but persons. So says Christ, 'I have sheep which are not of this fold.' Labour we therefore to love the Jews, as those who are to be called; and the saints departed, as those who are our brethren.

Obs. 10.—That martyrdom is a perfection; it is said, 'till they are fulfilled,' πληρώσωσιν. So Christ calls his suffering: 'I will watch to-day and to-morrow, and then,' says he, 'I shall be perfected.' If thou hast all holiness, and wantest this *coronis*, thou art not so perfect as martyrs for Christ are.

Obs. 11.—That saints departed do presently enter into bliss. They sleep not, but have white robes given them, as the priests had when they were first brought into the temple. These have the like when they are brought, as priests, into the inner temple of heaven. And their robes of glory are new ones, which they had not before; for they are given them anew. Glory clothes them, till they and their bodies meet again: and these are called robes, as reaching from head to foot; they are all over happy and glorious.

Obs. 12.—They reckon us fellow-servants and brethren, though we be sinful; and do hold a communion with us. Let us do the like towards our weak brethren, and esteem them such notwithstanding their infirmities, and although we be holier. There is a greater distance between us and these saints in heaven, in respect of purity, than can be supposed between us and the meanest saint here below.

Obs. 13.—That the cause for which they are reckoned martyrs is 'for the word of God,' and their testimony to it. So that if it be for any truth in the word, though never so small, it is accepted as if it were the greatest.

Obs. 14.—God may defer to answer prayers for the present. He doth so to saints in heaven; he puts them upon staying a while; much more, therefore, may he deal so with us. And yet God in the meantime recompenseth this demur some other way. As he gave these white robes of glory, so will he give thee other blessings that are better, in which thou mayest rest satisfied and content.

The sixth seal follows, from ver. 12 to the end of the chapter. Now as the former seals contained several punishments upon the heathenish Roman state, so this sixth expresseth the final accomplishment of God's wrath upon the heathenish religion in it, in throwing it down; and upon heathenish

worshippers, and upholders of Gentilism, in confounding them; and is therefore called, 'the great day of the Lamb's wrath.' Now, because it is thus called, and some phrases are used concerning it that are used of the immediate forerunners of the day of judgment, as Matt. xxiv. 9, when before the Son of man's coming the sun is said to be darkened, &c., therefore some interpreters have understood it of the great day of judgment only; and so you may have heard it often quoted by such as by piecemeals take up interpretations of this book, not having framed them to the series of the whole.

But, first, the great day of judgment it cannot be; the series of this prophecy will not admit that exposition. Which is argued—

1. From what goes before it; for John having but now spoken of the primitive times in the five former seals, and brought us but to three hundred years after Christ, in the tenth and last persecution, now to make a leap over the thirteen hundred years since passed, and after those primitive persecutions to bring in the day of judgment, were too great a stride, too wide a *chasma* and gulph in this orderly story.

2. From the series of things after this; for there is a seventh seal yet to be opened, and that to produce seven trumpets, which are new and fresh succeeding punishments upon that empire. And it is certain that there are no such punishments to come after the great day of judgment.

And as for the phrases here sounding so like those used of that day, it is certain that there is never a phrase here used but is frequently and ordinarily used to express great mutations and overturnings in kingdoms, and great calamities brought upon men in those kingdoms by God, long before the day of judgment. As—

1. That it is called the 'great day, in which who can stand?' ver. 17; and that the sun and moon are said to be darkened, &c.; you shall find the same expressions used, Joel ii. 10, to set forth the great overturning the Jewish state by the armies of the Chaldeans in the captivity. Their armies the prophet describes, ver. 2, 3, 8, and their sacking Jerusalem, ver. 9; and the confusion and calamities brought upon that state he expresseth by the same metaphors that are here used: ver. 10, 'The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.' And, ver. 11, because these were God's executioners of his vengeance, therefore he is described as their general, making a speech to them: 'The Lord shall utter his voice before his army; his camp is very great.' Therefore that time is called, as here, 'the great and terrible day of the Lord;' and 'who can abide it?' as here, 'who can stand?' Thus, Isa. xxxiv., where the prophet plainly describes the overthrow of Edom, as appears by ver. 5, though he calls all the world to consider her example as a warning to them, as ver. 1; that he would go on to do the like to them, as ver. 2; yet thus he describes it, just as here, ver. 4, 'All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all the host'—or *stars*—'of heaven shall fall down as from a fig-tree.' And yet all this foretells but the sword upon Edom, overturning that state, as appears by ver. 5, 8. It is the day of the Lord's vengeance for their persecuting of Sion, just as here.

2. And those other phrases also, of 'hiding themselves in caves and rocks of the mountains,' and 'calling upon the hills to cover them;' they are but expressions of such shames, and miseries, and calamities, as the vengeance of God in such great changes doth work. Thus, Isa. ii. 19, when God comes to punish Israel for their idols, and to send forth the light of the gospel into them, the idolaters, as confounded, are said to go into 'the holes of the

rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and the glory of his majesty.' And when the ten tribes were carried captive by Ashur, their calamities were expressed by this, Hos. x. 8, 'They shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the rocks, Fall upon us.' So that Christ, the giver of this vision, and opener of this seal, hath but borrowed the similitudes and expressions used by the prophets in several places, to set forth the like change, calamity, and confusion that befell the heathenish state of the Roman empire. But then—

Secondly, Because these places of the prophets alluded unto do speak of the overthrow of kingdoms by wars, therefore Mr Forbes would have this seal to be that utter overturning of the western empire of Rome, by the Goths and Vandals, which began four hundred years after Christ; and so to note out the ruin of the empire itself, and not of heathenism in it. And but for these reasons following, I should have thought so also: as—

1. That the first seal beginning but with the conquest of heathenism in the empire, (for Christ in the preaching the gospel did at first seek outwardly to overcome or plague nothing else,) here in this seal must be the accomplishment of that victory or full conquest gotten, described, and set forth; and so the same thing made the subject of the complete conquest described here, that is made the subject of the first onset in the first seal, ver. 2, 3; and that was the heathenish religion of the empire, and the upholders of it. And so Christ's first step, or degree of conquest in order to his kingdom, is completely in this chapter presented, with his first full victory over the first enemy whom he encountered in the world, even Satan, and his false worship; to shew that what Christ began with he makes an end of. And so this book still shews how he makes a clear and full despatch of such enemies first, as first he encounters. He encountered heathenism first by the gospel, then by plagues; but now, as one grown angry, he completes the victory by power and might, and by a violent concussion and shaking of that state. And having despatched this enemy, and so made clear work as he goes, as wise conquerors use to do, then he falls upon the empire itself, in the trumpets. And that is the reason why this last act of this tragedy is represented under such metaphors as the great day of judgment is set out by; even for this, that it imports a full and a complete victory, and a final overthrow of that which he had encountered. That as the day of judgment is a final conquest of all enemies by the Lion of Judah, so is this a like final conquest by the Lamb of this first enemy whom he did set himself to conquer, even Satan and his false worship set up by that Roman monarchy.

2. The trumpets that come after are reserved for the ruin of the empire, as a distinct thing from heathenism in it; and the vials for the overthrow of Popery and the faction of Mohammed. And—

3. Thus the parts of this prophecy are found to run on similarly, and things alike are put together in distinct visions. Here are three sorts of enemies, and so of plagues to ruin them, in this prophecy:—

(1.) The six seals; which are the beginnings of sorrows to the world; and they fall upon Satan's false worship, which stood in Christ's way.

(2.) The six trumpets; which fell upon the empire itself, for having persecuted and prosecuted the church.

(3.) The vials; which fall on the Pope and his idolatry, and on the Mohammedan faction, the Turks, his last enemies. These, therefore, are called the last plagues, chap. xvi.

4. And for a fourth reason, observe, that the 12th chapter, which begins

ns the story of the church in the first primitive times, as this doth thenish empire, doth wonderfully agree with this chapter here, con- like space of time, and describing the same conquest and victory (the dragon) in the Roman empire (in heaven): only with this that here the calamities and confusion that befell the kings or and the chieftains of heathenish worshippers, that did seek to t religion still, are set out; whereas there, only Satan's confusion in wn down is described, which was very suitable, that being the e church, this of the empire more eminently.

, two things are distinctly set out unto us under these phrases and :—

y the darkening the sun, moon, and stars, according to the ana- prophets, is expressed the deposing of those heathenish emperors iors in that state, considered as they did strive to keep up heath- h whom Satan and his worship also fell. So as though the state , yet those governors and the heathenism of the state were re- l destroyed, and thrown down from their heaven, the superior t of that state; which was done by Christ's sending madness and on Dioclesian and Maximinian, heathenish emperors; insomuch as f a sense of the Lamb's wrath, gave over their government, whilst in the meridian of their glory, to the wonderment of the world. ards Maxentius and Maximin, heathen emperors also, were over- icinius, whilst he favoured the Christians, and was colleague with e. By which Constantine it was afterwards more completely nd carried on; for when the foresaid Licinius made a revolt unto , Constantine subdued him and his chieftains, (for heathenism lown without blows,) and turned that whole state Christian, when posed heathenish persecutors.

ich a deposing of governors in a state, and overthrowing their in the prophets expressed by darkening the sun, moon, and stars, the overthrowing the state itself. So, Isa. xiii. 10, the depos- abylonian monarch and his nobles by the Medes is set forth by ening the sun,' their king; 'the moon,' their queen; 'the stars,' es. And in another place it is said, 'How art thou fallen, O iou son of the morning!' speaking of the bright star the king of o, Isa. xiv. 13, said he would 'ascend to heaven, and exalt his ve the stars.' In the dialect and phrase of speech used in the ntries, (as among the Arabians and Jews, &c.,) to throw down any lency, is expressed by casting down his heaven to the earth. And be said, that which also some interpreters would have, that that r follows expresseth but the same thing which was at first meta- uttered under the prophet's allusions of sun, moon, and stars: all n afterwards literally expoundeth, ver. 15, when he says, 'and the he earth;' that is, those Roman emperors, the *suns* of this firma- e stepped off from their glory; and their stars, the heathenish t adhered to them, were deposed; their mountains removed, that ieftains and strong men, as such are called, Isa. ii. 14; so that the ; an exposition of the other. And thus only the miserable over- the heathenish worshippers is here described, as became the seal- even as the putting down of Satan and his worship is expressed in rophecy.

t which may strengthen this interpretation is, that the rest of the being to proceed with the like metaphors, of plagues upon the sun,

moon, stars, earth, trees, &c., (for in such language and metaphors are the contents of the trumpets and vials expressed;) he, therefore, here gives one literal explanation of them in this, which is his first mention of such, which one may serve for all; that so, by the analogy of the Holy Ghost's own exposition here, the rest might be interpreted, who makes kings to be as the sun, and nobles as the stars, &c. To this purpose, you must know that in Scripture descriptions and expressions, (the prophets using to point things out by similitude,) every kingdom, state, or body of men is compared and assimilated to a world, in which what is superior and highest is called the *heavens;* and therein, the highest the *sun*, the next the *moon*, and next to them the *stars*, &c.; and what is of lower rank is called the *earth*, *sea*, *rivers*, and *trees*, &c. And therefore punishments on states and kingdoms in this book are expressed by casting them down from their heavens, and by miseries falling upon the rivers, the sea, &c., whereby such things are understood as answering in states amongst men in nearest resemblance unto the sea, earth, &c., in the great world. And this is the key, as of this vision, so of the trumpets and the vials that follow. And sometimes the Scripture expresseth the alterations of kingdoms themselves, and of all places of rank and of government, by this darkening the heavens, the sun, &c. So Hag. ii. 21, 22, 'Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother.' And sometimes only the deposing of persons from those places and dignities, the places standing still. Now, in the trumpets, the casting down the sun, stars, &c., is spoken of in the abstract, even the altering the very state, (together with deposing the persons,) power, and dignity of the empire. But here it is to be understood of deposing the persons only, in the concrete, who had that power, but were put down from it. And so it imports the throwing down the chieftains of heathen emperors, and the deposing them from their places, not yet meddling with the places themselves in the empire.

The second thing that these expressions hold forth is not simply the overthrowing of kingdoms and states, or of governors, &c., and so to be understood of political mutations only; but they are used to set forth a change and mutation of worship and of religion in a state. For as bodies politic are compared to a world, as was said, so religious bodies and states, considered in respect to their worship or religion, are thus compared also. So Jesus Christ is said to have his world, Ps. viii. 3, 'Thy heavens, thy moon and stars,' &c., where the sun is not mentioned, because Christ himself, who is the 'Sun of righteousness,' is the sun therein. Now, Heb. ii. 5, 6, that psalm is interpreted of Christ's world, the world to come, as it is called, ver. 5; both this of the gospel, in opposition to Adam's world, and Christ's kingdom hereafter.

Moreover, for the present, the state of Christ's worship and worshippers under the gospel, and his ordinances, are compared to a world wherein are heavens, and moon, and stars. Thus, Ps. xix. 1, 'The heavens declare the glory of God;' which is interpreted of the preaching of the gospel, Rom. x. 18, 'But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.' The apostles and their doctrine are the heavens, the lights in this heaven of Christ, to declare his glory to the world; and therefore the words of the 4th verse of that 19th Psalm are there in the 10th to the Romans applied to their preaching. And

you know ministers are called stars in the first chapter of this book of the Revelation. So likewise churches are called heavenly lights shining in the world, Phil. ii. 15; φωστῆρες, light-bearers, the same word that is given by the Septuagint to the stars, Gen. i. 14. And it appears by that place that they irradiate the world; not a house, as a candle or torch does, but the world, as stars do. And the apostles' ministry is compared to twelve stars, which the primitive church was crowned with, Rev. xii. 1. And so, Heb. xii. 27, it is one part of the meaning of shaking the heavens; that is, the ordinances of the gospel, which are called the heavens.

That frame of worship which Christ hath erected and instituted to be under the gospel, is interpreted to be meant by the heavens,—for as they are the ordinances of day and night, so are these of the church,—as oppositely, the legal worship is there called the earth. Yea, the temple-worship, with the priests and elders of that religion, are so called. Therefore, Dan. viii. 9, 10, Antiochus's causing that worship to cease, and putting down those priests, is expressed to us by his prevailing over the host of heaven, and his casting down some of the host and stars unto the ground. Yea, ver. 11, he is said to magnify himself against the prince of that host; that is, against God and Christ, the sun in this firmament, as the sun is prince of the stars. Now then, as Christ thus hath his world, so Antichrist also hath his heavens, and sun, and earth, &c., which are to be interpreted spiritually as well as politically. And thus Satan's heathenish religion and worship in the Roman empire is in like manner here expressed unto us. The false gods of the heathens are called in Scripture the 'host of heaven,' as Deut. xvii. 3, not only because some of them worshipped the sun and stars immediately, but also because the Romans and Grecians did entitle the stars by the names of their gods, or men famous among them whom they worshipped; and so they worshipped both at once under one and the same name. The sun they entitled Apollo, and the other planets by the names of other gods and goddesses, as Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus; and the moon they called Phœbe, or the great goddess Diana; all which had once been men and women among them, though now, being dead, they were worshipped for gods and goddesses. So that they worshipped the host of heaven under the names of men; though really and indeed, under both these, they worshipped Satan and his devils, though not immediately, yet interpretatively. Thus speaks the Apostle, 1 Cor. x. 20, 'The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils.'

Now then, this advancement of Satan, under the names and titles of the host of heaven, was truly his heaven, wherein the devils, by that religion, were set up as the gods of this world, as 2 Cor. iv. 4. And answerably the throwing down of Satan's worship and religion is expressed by a change of the heavens, even as Christ expresseth the throwing down the heathenish worship by the apostles' preaching to be its 'falling from heaven like lightning;' which Christ speaks of their casting out devils then, when sent out to preach, as a certain omen which his faith had beforehand, that Satan, in like manner, with all his worship, should be thrown down by the preaching the gospel in the empire. And so accordingly, chap. xii., Satan and his angels are said to be cast down from heaven, when he and they were acknowledged for gods no longer.

Now, the alteration of this heathenish worship and change of this religion in the empire is the shaking the heavens and earth here meant. The word for *earthquake* is not to be confined only to the earth, (in English we have no word large enough,) for it imports the concussion or throwing down by a commotion of that heathenish world, the heavens and earth, and all of that

religion, even of all that had a station in that accursed frame. Thus, Hag. ii. 6, 7, you have the like allusion for the alteration of the Jewish worship into the gospel worship; and then, that alteration yet to come, of this gospel worship, when the kingdom of Christ shall be set up. The one is expressed by shaking the earth; the other, the heavens. And that shaking is interpreted, Heb. xii. 27, to be 'removing away of the things shaken.'

And so the throwing down Satan and his devils from being worshipped any longer under the names of the host of heaven, and those appellatives given the stars, and titles to men departed, whereof he received all the real honour, may fitly be here understood to be the darkening the sun and moon, and the falling of these stars from heaven. As Christ is the sun in his heaven, so Satan, the prince of devils, the prince of this host of heaven, as Daniel's phrase is, was the sun in this firmament. And the lesser devils, with him worshipped under the title of the lesser gods, and of the stars, are the *stars* here which fall from heaven. And as the moon is Christ's church, and the queen in his heaven, so the college of priests, (who were then in Rome, as the Pope and cardinals are now,) that were the instruments of his worship, they were the moon in his heaven. And so his consecrated places, his islands and mountains, the high places of his worship, were removed out of their place; that is, diverted from that use which they were once put to in that idolatrous worship.

So then this mutation of the heathenish religion, from Constantine's time downward, during the space of one hundred years, for so long was it ere heathenism could be utterly extirpated and wholly abolished for ever rising again, is here set forth unto us by two things, here distinctly and apart laid down:—

First, The overthrowing the worship and religion itself, expressed by those metaphors before mentioned. As—

1. By the eclipsing of the sun and moon: 'The sun became black, and the moon as blood;' that is, the glory of these their chief false gods, and the priests of them, was darkened.

2. By 'the falling of the stars, as figs not fully ripe;' that is, by a violent wind; shewing that men's hearts were not loosened of themselves to a dislike of that religion, nor brought so freely off from it at the first. They would have stuck on still, had not the wind of power and authority shook them down.

3. By the vanishing of the whole heaven of this worship, as 'a scroll folded up.' The manner of the Jews was to write on parchment, which, from being folded or rolled up, they called *volumen*, a volume; and with us parchment is from thence called vellum to this day.

Which metaphor imports—

(1.) That as when a scroll is folded up, not a letter of it is to be seen, but immediately upon the rolling up all do disappear; so these gods vanished, not any of their worship retains the same name now that was then used. There is not a tittle of those gods left; they have had no worshippers these thousand years.

(2.) As a book or scroll folded up is not used, so neither is this religion.

In the *second* place, this mutation is represented unto us in the confusion that befell the upholders of that ethnic worship, the Atlases of these heavens, that endeavoured to support them, and opposed Constantine and other emperors in the discarding of this, and bringing in the Christian religion. The devil goes not out of a man possessed, nor out of our hearts, without blows, nor till a stronger than he comes. So neither did he leave that station of

his in the empire easily and without resistance, but egged on kings, namely, some emperors and generals, and the common sort of people with them, to join together for the upholding of the old religion and worship of his. These the Lamb encounters, and in his wrath confounds. Now, it is observable how John useth some of the very names which were given the Romans in their several ranks; for here are three several ranks mentioned :—(1.) Highest governors, as kings. (2.) The middle sort of men, as the rich and strong. (3.) The inferior multitude of false worshippers, as bondmen and free.

1. Kings; that is, emperors, for which the Greek tongue had no word but βασιλεῖς, which, therefore, the apostles used for emperor; so Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 13, and Paul, 1 Tim. ii. 2. Then χιλίαρχοι, captains of thousands. The Roman legions, over whom these were captains, consisted of seven thousand.

2. Rich men and mighty men, who made up the middle sort of men.

3. Bondmen and free, who made up the lower and inferior rank of men. These were usual distinctions of men's ranks among the Romans.

Now their confusion is expressed—

1. By their shameful overthrow; they fly for shame, and hide themselves in dens, a phrase expressing shameful confusion and disappointment.

2. Their despair of help, intimated in that phrase, 'They shall say to the mountains, Fall upon us,' &c. So Luke xxiii. 30, and Hos. x. 8, where when common calamities came upon the ten tribes, and upon the state of Jerusalem, their being at their wits' end, in respect of getting rid out of them, is expressed by their calling to the mountains to cover them, and the hills to fall upon them, as wishing for death rather than the present miseries. Not that they should use these very words, but that their state should be such as should make them wish some such thing, or anything, rather than that misery then brought upon them. Those of other nations who are reduced to some extreme and miserable exigent, are wont to express their grievance by wishing the earth to swallow them; but this particular phrase is peculiar to the Jews, who had a rocky country, full of caves, to which they for refuge were wont to fly,—and therefore it is usual in Scripture to say, 'Enter into thy rock, and hide thyself,' as Isa. ii. 10,—and being in those caves, their fear and despair did oft-times put them upon wishing that those rocks would fall on them, and make an end of them.

3. The phrases import that all this is done with a sense and conviction in the hearts of these enemies of Christ, that it was by the power of Christ, whom they called accursed, and derided; and that he was indeed the king of the world, and conqueror of them. For they that are thus confounded do within themselves call to the rocks to cover them from 'the face of the Lamb,' with whose anger their consciences were struck, in those victories got over them, and miseries brought upon them. And therefore it is here brought in as their speech, to bid the rocks cover them from the face of the Lamb, for the great day of the Lamb's wrath is come, 'and who shall be able to stand,' or 'to abide it?' as Joel ii. 11.

Now the story of those times, when the heathenish religion was altered in the empire, presents such a face of things as this seal doth. For Dioclesian and Maximinian, the greatest persecutors that ever the church had, in the height and ruff of their imperial glory and rage, did give over their authority and empire, and retired themselves, whereof no historian could give the reason, but imputed it to madness; but indeed they did it so, as it were, to hide themselves from the face of the Lamb. To these succeeded Galerius, and Maximin, and Constantius, the father of Constantine. Maximin, persecuting the Christians, was smitten with a strange disease, and being ever

and anon convinced that Christ was king, he recalled his edicts for the persecution of them; and yet, like Pharaoh, he afterwards put them forth again, till at length he died miserably, acknowledging Christ's wrath. Then was Maxentius set up by the Romans, a defender of the heathenish cause. But being overcome by Licinius, he threw away his imperial robes, fled, and lay hid for the safeguard of his life, and acknowledged Christ by a decree; but his flesh was eaten of worms. Then Licinius opposing Constantine, joined in the empire with him, was overcome by him, and he and his complices condemned, at the place of execution acknowledging Christ to be God. What afterward befell Julian, who attempted to set up that heathen religion again,—as how, being shot in his wars against Persia, he took his blood, and flinging it into the air, cried out, *Vicisti O Galilæe,*—you cannot be ignorant of.

Obs. 1.—Learn, when you see any notable overthrow given the enemies of Christ, to raise up your hearts to thoughts of the day of judgment. We find, as here, so elsewhere, notable judgments on God's enemies set forth and described under the language of that day. It is frequent in Scripture, as Psalm xviii. and elsewhere. They may mutually help to strengthen our faith in each other; a particular judgment, in that of the great day, that it will also come; and that great day doth also assure us, that Christ will here be avenged on his enemies. Christ hath many great days that forerun that great day; and wicked men, and wicked causes, have days of judgment here.

Obs. 2.—How easy it is for the Lamb to make an alteration of religion in a kingdom, causing the new one which he brings in to prevail. Thus in a few years he turned the whole empire Christian, even when heathenism was rooted in all men's hearts, and when Satan had a throne fixed in appearance to continue; then, by his power possessing himself of the emperor's heart, he, as the phrase is, 1 Kings ii. 15, 'turned the kingdom about;' and this, when men's hearts of themselves were not turned, but were as figs not fully ripe, yet shaken off by this wind. And he folded up the heavens as a scroll; not one constellation or star of all those false gods, that then shone so bright in all men's eyes, having shined in the world these many hundred years. And Christ hath promised to do the like against Popery. Which state, as it is the image of that empire and religion, so it shall bear the likeness of its punishment. What a mighty change was wrought in the hearts of kings and princes upon the first Reformation! And God will work the like upon the second Reformation, before Rome is destroyed, and will put it into their hearts to ruin her utterly.

Obs. 3.—Christ thinks it not enough for him to confound his enemies, but he will make them also to acknowledge his truth. Thus he did by Nebuchadnezzar, by Antiochus, and by those persecutors; and thus he will do by all the proud of the earth. He will not only confound the false church and synagogue of Satan; but he will make them come and acknowledge that God hath loved the Philadelphian, Rev. iii. 9. How often in the prophets is this made the fruit of their punishment! and by this it is expressed, 'They shall know that I am the Lord.' It is ill standing out with Christ in anything. Christ will have, not only every knee to bow, but every tongue to confess his name. Learn we therefore not to stand out against convictions of any kind. The Lamb will in the end have, not only a real victory in men's punishments, but he will have men render it more complete by their confessions and acknowledgments.

Obs. 4.—How in dispensing punishments, Christ meets with persecutors

in their kind: they caused poor Christians to fly into caves and dens, and to worship the Lamb in corners, as the Apologies of those times shew; now Christ comes forth and appears openly, and drives them into corners, wherein to hide their heads.

Obs. 5.—What a glorious and long time Satan, the god of this world, and his devils with him, had of it, when they were counted as the only true gods, and were worshipped for such by the whole world during the space of three hundred years. They who are reserved in chains for hell were then counted 'the Immortal Gods,' possessors of heaven; and had their seat, in all men's opinions, above the stars, having all the world for their devout and zealous worshippers. What, therefore, is it to have a great name, or the best name, the name of a saint, for a while here? The devils had not only the names and titles, but the honours of gods, and that for some thousands of years; for whom, notwithstanding, the lowest place in hell is designed.

Obs. 6.—You will not wonder at the prosperity of wicked men, that they carry it so long in the world, if you consider but how long the devil carried it, without encountering any stop in his way; as having all nations for his inheritance. God was worshipped but in one poor corner of the earth; but the devil possessed the heavens, and was as the sun in the firmament, and his priests as the moon and stars, as if they had been perpetual ordinances. Think not much at the continuance of Popery for twelve hundred years. Heathenism stood far longer, and Christ will make more quick work in the last days than in those past.

Obs. 7.—That Christ, though he be a lamb, yet he can, and will be angry. Men have all such sweet thoughts of Christ, as if he had no anger in him; but 'when his anger is kindled but a little, then blessed are all they that put their trust in him.'

Obs. 8.—That God punisheth idolaters and their idols together. Here both the heathenish emperors and their religion and gods are together removed. Thus, Isa. ii. 17–19, 'And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.' Which place is parallel to this here, and a prophecy of the kingdom of Christ. Thus God punished Egypt, as appears by Num. xxxiii. 4, where it is said, 'upon their gods also he executed judgments.' The like you have in Jer. xliii. 11–13. So also was Babylon and her gods punished, as Jer. l. 2, 'Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.' And thus God also did, when he began to ruin Popery, the spiritual Egypt and Babylon. He punished monks, pulling down monasteries and their idols together; his anger was against them, as well as against their persons. And so superstitious ceremonies and will-worship will down together.

Obs. 9.—How fearful and terrible will the day of judgment be, when Christ shall come as the lion of the tribe of Judah, if now, when he reigns as a lamb, carrying things meekly, and with much patience, he brings such confounding judgments! All vengeance here is but the vengeance of a lamb, in comparison of the rending of a lion that is to come. For, as I take it, he is set forth as a lamb in respect to his governing and dispensations until the day of judgment; but then he will come as the lion of Judah, and shew

himself so much more terrible then, as a lion is more terrible than a lamb. All terrors of conscience which men suffer here, which yet make them call for the hills to cover them, are but the wrath of the lamb in comparison of those roarings of the lion at the great day. Oh, consider this you that forget God, lest he come and tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you!

I shall now proceed no further by way of a large commenting, or raising any more observations, until I come to the *Second Part.*

CHAPTER V.

The six first trumpets.

Now the six first trumpets contain several steps and degrees of ruining the imperial government of the empire itself when turned Christian, by several wars and incursions of barbarous nations upon it, whereof trumpets are suitably made the denouncers; and this in revenge of so much Christian blood as was spilt when the empire was heathenish: even as the captivity of Babylon did break the Jewish state for shedding innocent blood in the time of Manasseh, at which time that state was idolatrous, though he and all Judah did afterwards turn to the true worship of God again. And according to the division of the empire, east and west, accordingly was God's method in the ruining:—

First, Of the western parts of it, by the Goths and Vandals, who utterly shattered the government of the occidental emperors, and broke it into ten kingdoms; over which the Pope succeeded.

Then, *secondly*, after that, overturning the oriental part:—

1. By the Saracens; of whom Mohammed was the head, who wrung one great part of the eastern empire, in Arabia, Egypt, and Assyria, out of the emperor's hands, and subjected those dominions unto Mohammedanism. And then—

2. By the Turks, professing Mohammedanism also; who conquered and subdued, not only what the Saracens before them had done, but also that other part of the eastern empire remaining still Christian, namely, in Natolia and in Greece, over which the Greek emperors, successors of the Roman, till then continued, but were now wholly subjected, together with Constantinople itself, the seat of their empire, unto the Turks, who thus alone possess the whole eastern empire unto this day.

And according to this method of ruining the empire, the trumpets are answerably divided by the Holy Ghost.

The four first trumpets, which are made the lesser evils and miseries, are the wars of the Goths and Vandals, in four several incursions, chap. viii.; but the two latter, the fifth and sixth trumpets, which are made the *woe-trumpets*, chap. viii. 13, chap. ix. 12, chap. xi. 14, and so are distinguished from the former, are those infinite calamities and inbondagements which were brought upon the eastern part of the empire by the Saracens' wars and conquests, who are the fifth trumpet, and by the Turks, who are the sixth trumpet; both longer for continuance, and greater for extremity, than the four first, and that by far.

Now to give a little general light into these trumpets, as I have done into the seals. The trumpets are the vengeance upon the empire itself, for the blood of the saints therein shed; which therefore was promised unto the martyrs under the fifth seal, chap. vi. 11, whose prayers are here, chap. viii.

5, offered up by Christ, the time being come for the vengeance promised, and so the trumpets sound.

SECTION I.

The exposition of the 8th chapter.—The four first trumpets signifying the ruin of the western empire.

The four first trumpets are chiefly upon the western empire extended all over Europe; which was performed by four steps or degrees.

The first falling on the earth, ver. 7; the second on the sea, ver. 8; the third on the rivers, ver. 10; the fourth on the sun, moon, and stars, ver. 12.

You must remember, as before was said, that kingdoms and empires are represented in Scripture by a world that hath heaven, earth, sea, &c., as Jer. iv. 23. Wherein—

1. The earth, and grass, and trees thereon, are the lower sort of people, both the richer and poorer; as, Zech. xi. 2, 'Howl, fir-tree; for the cedar is fallen; because all the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down.'

2. The sea is the extent of the jurisdiction of an empire or kingdom over several dominions. Therefore Rome is said to sit on many waters, and to arise out of the sea, which is but the collection of many waters; that is, many nations. The like phrase to which is used of the Babylonish monarchy over many kingdoms; they are called 'her sea,' Jer. li. 36, 44, compared: 'Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.' 'And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.' And the many nations under the Assyrian monarchy are so called, Ezek. xxxi. 4, 'The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field.'

3. The rivers are the several cities, and magistrates over them, who have a lesser kind of jurisdiction over those cities or provinces.

4. By the sun, moon, and the other stars in this world, are meant the superior magistrates, and the glory of them, as Isa. xiii. 10, 'For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.' Jer. xv. 9, 'She that hath borne seven languisheth; she hath given up the ghost; her sun is gone down while it is yet day; she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the Lord.'

Now these four trumpets contain four several degrees of calamities by wars that befell the western empire, and the city of Rome, the head of that empire, by the incursions of the Goths and Vandals, from the year of Christ 400 to the year 540. Of which—

The *first* harrowed the earth, the people of that empire, as wars at first used to light most heavy upon them. It proceeded to no further harm than the burning up of the trees and grass; as, Rev. viii. 7, 'The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.'

The *second* fell on the sea; for the Goths did break off from the imperial

yoke those nations that were subject to it, and gave them opportunity to set up ten kingdoms, which remain in Europe to this day, beginning in France, anno 413; and by 450, all the ten were up, as the chronicles shew. And this rending of the kingdoms from it, with the burning of that great mountain, the sacking of Rome itself, which, as Babylon of old, Jer. li. 25, is called a 'destroying mountain,' as overshadowing all cities; and her sacking by Cyrus is there called the 'burning of the mountain;' so this spoiling and sacking of Rome by Alaricus, king of the Goths, anno 410, is called the 'burning of the mountain,' chap. viii. 8: 'And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood.'

The *third* trumpet produceth the fall of that bright star which is called 'a great star burning as a lamp,' that is, a blazing star, or comet; which was the utter extinguishing and putting down of emperors, anno 476, who ceased in Augustulus, whose fall is expressed like that of the king of Babel's, Isa. xiv. 12, 'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer,' or morning-star, 'son of the morning!' Which prince, upon his fall, hath his name given him, *Wormwood*, for that he was a prince of bitterness and sorrows. And together with him, many provincial cities and magistrates (which are called *rivers* and *fountains*) had their dignity taken from them; and this is the third trumpet, ver. 10, 11, 'And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.'

Rome now being in the hands of the Goths, was the seat of those kings that won it, who yet conserved in it the senators, consuls, and supreme magistrates, in their ancient glory. But then comes the *fourth* trumpet: ver. 12, 'And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.' And this totally deprives this city of Rome of her ancient form of government, under consuls, senators, &c., with the glory and majesty of which it had shined many hundred years, before ever the imperial power was placed over it; and therefore that government is here called the *sun*, &c., because of the glory and majesty of that state, under which it had won to itself the monarchy of the world; which ancient government had still continued under the emperors, but was now wholly and utterly subverted; and this was done in the last war, anno 542. Here was the glory of the western empire and Rome utterly extinguished, but that the Pope (whom you shall find in the 13th chapter, when we come to the book-prophecy) obtains a power there, though upon another title than these emperors had, over these ten kingdoms, and builds up another Rome upon the ruins of the old, and so possesseth the seat of the former beast, the empire. But because the title he pretends is the title of the church, although a false one, therefore his story comes not in in this seal-prophecy, but in the church-prophecies, chap. xiii.

But these four trumpets that fall upon the west are but lesser evils in respect of those that are to fall upon the eastern part, which during all these alterations in the west stands entire and whole, professing the Christian faith. The other two trumpets, which are their portion, chap. ix., do, for continuance and extremity of calamities, infinitely exceed the other; and therefore they have this preface to them, chap. viii. 13, 'Woe, woe, woe, to

the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the voices of the other trumpets, that are yet to sound!' for so God ordered it, as his manner is, that that eastern part, standing longest, should be reserved unto the sorer punishment.

SECTION II.

The exposition of the 9th chapter.—The fifth and sixth trumpets betoken the ruin of the eastern empire, which was first broken by the Saracens, and at last utterly destroyed by the Turks, A.D. 1453.

Here the *fifth* trumpet sounds, which produceth the falling of a star from heaven, which opens the bottomless pit, and lets out smoke as out of a furnace, which darkens the sun and air, and lets out an innumerable company of locusts, whose cruel description you have, ver. 7–10, 'And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns of gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months;' who torment men so that they shall seek death, but shall not find it. Such shall be the calamities of those times. By all which is set out the bringing in of Mohammedanism, the greatest imposture that ever the world knew, which darkens the sun and air by putting out the light of Christian profession. And this was done by Mohammed, who is that star that fell from the profession of Christianity, and opened hell to bring forth that damned religion of his, making himself the prophet of God; unto whom an innumerable company of Arabians, his countrymen,—who are here called locusts for their multitudes, as the Midianites and Amalekites are also called, Judges vii. 12,—did cleave, and set him up as king: ver. 11, 'And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.' Wringing from out of the hands of the eastern empire Arabia, Egypt, Assyria, Armenia, and much of Asia the Less, and extending their dominion further over Persia, East India, and a great part of Africa and Spain, they became almost as great an empire as that of Rome had been, although this dominion of Mohammed extended another way, yet withal possessing the one half of the eastern empire. Only these are bidden by God not to 'hurt the servants of God sealed in their foreheads,' ver. 4, for God had some true believers in that part of the eastern empire who yet remained Christian; and among them God had some also whom you read to have been beforehand sealed, chap. vii. 3, 'saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads,' ere that any trumpets blew. Such was God's care to prevent all hurt unto them, of which I shall afterwards particularly speak. And this kingdom began to be set up anno 630, and continued many hundred years.

Then succeeds the *sixth* trumpet, which is the second woe-trumpet, and ordained to bring calamities on the other part of the eastern empire, which was left standing still under the successors of the Roman monarchy, and professing the Christian religion in Asia the Less, and in Greece, known commonly in historians by the name of the empire of Greece; to ruin which, God had ready prepared four angels, with four several armies of horsemen, which amounted to 200,000,000, as chap. ix. 14-16, 'saying to the sixth angel

1 had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for our, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred and thousand: and I heard the number of them;' which armies, with ngels their leaders, being a long while restrained, lay hovering about orders of the river Euphrates. Whom the angel of this trumpet lets by the command of God, like so many furies, to fall upon the last part s eastern empire remaining, and also to conquer those other dominions the Saracens,' under the fifth trumpet, had before overrun. Now, ling to all the characters and footprints which we find in the Turkish , no prophecy doth or can more punctually describe any nation or than this doth the Turks, and their irruption upon the eastern empire; hen they came first out of their native country, about the year 1040 Christ, did seat themselves first by the river Euphrates, and were d into four several governments or kingdoms, known commonly in ans by these four names—first Iconian, seated at Iconium; the second ppo; the third at Damascus; and the fourth at Bagdat, or Babylon, ing on the river Euphrates. Who having lain hovering thereabouts for ace of two hundred years, did, about the year of Christ 1300, overrun tolia, or Asia the Less, and joining all into one kingdom under Otto- the forefather of the present Great Turk, did not cease till they had Constantinople itself and all Greece, the empire of which they put , which was now the only relic of the ancient Roman empire, and this year 1453, which is a hundred and eighty-six years since;* who s that whole eastern empire unto this day; for the number of the which is an hour, a day, a month, and a year, is not yet fulfilled or ed, being by computation three hundred and ninety-six years from his reaking out. The raising of the Turkish empire by Ottoman in Asia ess, was A.D. 1300.†

SECTION III.

xposition of the 7th chapter.—Why reserved till after that of the 8th and 9th.—Who are intended by the hundred and forty-four thousand persons that were sealed in their foreheads.

aving given you the meaning of the six trumpets, chap. viii., ix., I must return to shew you the meaning of those twelve thousand out of every , in all a hundred and forty-four thousand, which you read of chap. vii., to tell you who they are that were there beforehand sealed. For though , to shew his care, is said to seal them before these trumpets blew, yet I l not tell you who they were so fitly until after you should have heard what parts of the world these trumpets chiefly blew.

he persons sealed are, ver. 3, called 'servants of God,' so that they are believers; they are also called Jews, not that they were so by birth, for that the company they grow up into, and of whom these are the cessors, are said to be 'out of all nations, kindreds, and tongues,' ver. 9, therefore are of the Gentiles; as also because the Jews have generally hardened all along the times of this prophecy, to this day. But the lation, speaking in the language of the Old Testament and the types of, calls true believers Jews, and the Israel of God: Gal. vi. 16, 'And any as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and

* This being writ 1639. † Laonicus Chalcocond. de Rebus Turcicis, lib. i.

upon the Israel of God;' and false and idolatrous Christians it calls Gentiles, as chap. xi. 2, 'But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.' 'Who say they are Jews, and are not,'—that is, profess themselves Christians, and are not,—'but do lie,' chap. iii. 9.

These are numbered up by thousands, in allusion to 'the thousands of Israel,' as the phrase commonly is in Moses's writings,—Israel's seventy-two persons brought into Egypt being now multiplied by thousands,—as Num. x., xxxi. And these are said to be *sealed*, in allusion to that sealing of the mourners before the captivity of Babylon, Ezek. ix.: so these, before the miseries and captivity of these trumpets, as those that were to be preserved under them in all ages. God preserving by a kind of miracle, (for it is no other to consider it,) in the midst of all this Mohammedan tyranny, both under Turks and Saracens, in the eastern part of the world, thousands of true believers, even a hundred and forty-four thousand; as he did, under the tyranny of Ahab, preserve seven thousand that did not bow the knee to Baal; and as he did the like number of a hundred and forty-four thousand under the like antichristian tyranny in the west, as in chap. xiv. in the book-prophecy will appear. Only there, chap. xiv., they are more roundly in the general summed up together, to the number of a hundred and forty-four thousand; whereas here they are only reckoned by twelve several particular parcels, twelve thousand out of the twelve tribes: whether to shew their more scattered and divided condition, happily alluding to the twelve tribes, then, when the apostles wrote, scattered (as James speaks, chap. i. 1) in those eastern parts; or if not so, yet to the twelve tribes, as living apart in several quarters of the land of Judea, and not as assembled at Jerusalem in the temple.

So likewise these dwelling scatteredly in several nations, which were to be overcome by the trumpets, not assembled in public worship or churches, such as were acceptable to God, but remaining single; they are numbered by a set number, to shew that they shall be few. For this defining of their number is in opposition to the 'innumerable company' that are to grow out of them, as ver. 9, 'After this, I saw a great multitude, which none could number;' and their number being multiplied by twelve, as their root, and a thousand, hence it is a long number, extending in length much further than in breadth;* to shew that he speaks not of Christians as in one age arising to this number, but through many ages continuing. And they are multiplied by twelve to shew their breed and kind to be from the apostles, and of the apostolic faith, which, chap. xxi. 14, is made the mystery of this number, 'And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.' And they are presented in one uniform state during all that time, even unto the New Jerusalem; of which, because these and their successors are to be made partakers, therefore it is that those promises of the New Jerusalem, and the representation of it, come in from the 9th to the end, to shew their partaking therein, as the reward of the great tribulation they come out of: ver. 14, 15, 'And I said unto

* The idea involved in this conceit seems to be founded upon the twofold meaning of the term square, as denoting both a *figure* whose breadth is equal to its length, and the *number* which results from the multiplication of a number by itself. As one hundred and forty-four is a square number, and may be regarded as representing a square figure; so one hundred and forty-four thousand may be regarded as representing a rectangle, whose sides are twelve and twelve thousand respectively.—ED.

him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.'

Now these seem to be a differing company from that hundred and forty-four thousand in the 14th chapter: for those there do not remain till the New Jerusalem, in that dark and loose condition, upon Mount Sion, but long before do break forth into a separation from Antichrist, and set up glorious temples, filled visibly with the presence of God, as smoke, out of which come the vials; but these continue in one uniform condition, still alike, until the very approach of the New Jerusalem, and do then come newly out from under a sore and long bondage, here called 'great tribulation,' and are presented as more scattered and divided, as being more spread over the face of the earth, singly here and there, and therefore reckoned up by several tribes; whereas those there are summed up together only in their total number. They are alike, being but a few both of them, and in like times of darkness and desolation; yet with this difference, that the one continues to the very New Jerusalem, but the other long before grows up to a glorious light, and then outgrows that number.

Now, who these hundred and forty-four thousand are, out of whom, as being the predecessors of them, do come that 'innumerable company,' that shall, together with the Jews, possess the New Jerusalem, is made the inquiry of John, and is one of the wonders of this book; which therefore one of the twenty-four elders would have John especially to mark and observe, as a strange thing, beyond the expectation and imagination of men, that God should ever take those, so numerable a company, into so great a privilege, as to be made denizens of the New Jerusalem, and have their names found there. This you may observe by the question which the elder asketh John, to provoke and stir up his observation, ver. 13, 'What are these? and whence come they?' Thence! where, when you are told, you will scarce believe that God should intend this so great a privilege unto such, even the poor Christian elect believers, dispersedly scattered over the eastern parts of the world, the now Turkish dominions, which were anciently called the eastern empire, and the churches therein, called the Grecian churches. And for this I take the Holy Ghost's own designation, and as it were his pointing with the finger at them, to be my guide and warrant for this interpetation; as also the characters of, and notes of difference of, the hundred and forty-four thousand here and in chap. xiv.

1. It is evident their sealing here is for their preservation from hurt—as ver. 3, 'saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads'—from the four winds that were to be let loose, mentioned ver. 1, 'And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree;' by which are meant the cruel blasts of devastating and depopulating wars of fierce and cruel nations, dashing against each other, as winds use to do. Thus the wars that scattered Elam, or Persia, in Jeremiah's prophecy, are expressed, Jer. xlix. 36, 'And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come.' Now these wars, or winds, are all one with the blasts of the ensuing trumpets, chap. viii. 9; for to prevent the hurt of these servants

of God under these trumpets is it that these are thus beforehand sealed. Only, what is there particularly expressed by trumpets, is here in general expressed by the four winds.

Now then, according to reason, look, which of these ensuing six trumpets are the sorest, and bring most hurt and danger to the servants of God, the sealing of them must most respect the times and plagues of those trumpets. Now, according to the note of aggravation which the Holy Ghost himself hath put upon the fifth and sixth trumpets, that they are the *væ-tubæ*, the woe-trumpets; so, chap. viii. 13, 'And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!' in respect of which the four first are but mild and gentle. And then, according to the former interpetation given, these two woe-trumpets being the overrunnings of the Saracen and Mohammedan nations, the greatest plague in respect of outward war and bondage that ever befell the Christian world. Which trumpets were to be, and have been, for time, five times double the continuance of the other four trumpets; for it is already one thousand years since they began, and the other four took up but two hundred years; and for extremity of bondage, there hath been no comparison between those four first trumpets and these two latter.

The wars of the Goths, indeed, did rather relieve the servants of God against the flood of Arian persecution,—as, chap. xii. 16, 'And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth,'—although it did break and harrow the empire. Hence, therefore, surely the hurt aimed at by God, which these hundred and forty-four thousand were in danger of, must needs in reason be from these two trumpets especially, and therefore must chiefly respect the elect Christians in the eastern parts, where these trumpets sounded; for the Christians in the west were in no danger of them. It must, therefore, respect these tribes seated among them. Add to this, that even the winds of some of those four first trumpets also reached unto great devastations of some of these eastern parts. And the first breaking forth of those Goths and barbarous nations was upon Thrace, Macedon, Thessaly, and Greece, ruining all the cities therein, except Athens and Thebes; and then after five years' harrowing the east, they fell upon the west, but first began in the east. So then, the two first, and longest, and sorest being upon the eastern Christians, and they beginning and ending thus also with them; in reason, the sealing of them must principally and eminently be intended, according to the proportion that the trumpets fell upon them, which was tenfold to what they did upon the western.

2. And as in reason it must be so, so the Holy Ghost hath declared that the preservation from the hurt of those Mohammedan invasions was the aim of this sealing thus beforehand; so great was God's care; and that therefore these servants of God, the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed here, are indeed the Christians of the east, who were only in danger to be hurt in their souls by apostasy, through the tyranny of these trumpets. You may read in the 9th chapter, ver. 4, that when these Saracen locusts, under their ringleader Mohammed, were first let loose, and had their commission, that then comes in this clause of exception, that 'they should hurt only those men that were not sealed.' In that therefore then, and not till then, and there only, the mention of this privilege of their being sealed comes in, it manifestly argues that the main and primary intention of the sealing of

this company had its place and accomplishment in persons that were under the blasts of these locusts. The Holy Ghost hath set this as a hand in the margin, to point at them; and to shew, that although in the vision their sealing comes in beforehand, chap. vii., yet here especially it receives its intended aim and fulfilling in the real execution of it: as if he had said, Now comes in the mystery of the sealing of those hundred and forty four thousand, chap. vii., in these two trumpets, the fifth and sixth. Neither can it be objected, that even the Christians in the west were preserved from the hurt of these incursions, in that these Mohammedans were restrained from breaking in upon these ten kingdoms, and that so they might be meant; for—

(1.) The mystery of sealing notes the singling out and marking of some here and there, from the crowd of others, designed to ruin, by God's special hand of providence; even as the door-posts of the Israelites were marked, as a man marks his sheep when he puts them in among other droves. And so the mourners going into captivity with the rest were marked. But so not the servants of God in the west only, but all the kingdoms of the west should have been said to be sealed; which is contrary to the mystery of sealing here intended. And therefore it must mean God's scattered ones, under the blasts of those trumpets scattered, like the twelve tribes, James i. 1, here and there in those countries, but their souls preserved faithful unto Christ, maugre all the Mohammedan seducements or bondage they were then subjected unto. And—

(2.) They are said, when they partake of the New Jerusalem, ver. 14, 15, to 'come out of great tribulation;' and therefore it must be meant of such as were not wholly kept free from Mohammedan incursions, but were under them, and in great tribulation by reason of them. For, as Forbes well observes, that great tribulation, chap. vii. 14, must needs be the danger of those locusts, chap. ix. 4, from the hurt of which, so as not to damn their souls, though afflict them they might, they should be preserved; although he indeed interprets both this tribulation, and the hurt done by the locusts, to be that antichristian persecution in the west; but it is rather that tyranny of Mohammedans in the east.

Add to all this the many characters in the text that carry it to these eastern Christians, affording probable reasons that they should be intended: as—

First, That the angel who seals them is said to ascend *from the east*, ver. 2, or from the rising of the sun, as it is in the original, as coming up like the sun when it riseth, in the eastern part of the horizon, or of the world. And his standing there to seal these Christians manifestly thereby draweth our eyes to the eastern parts of the world, as the place where these sealed ones are to be found.

And, *secondly*, that they are presented as a few that may be numbered, and as making up but a few in many ages, as was said, and living in that condition, even to the very times of the New Jerusalem, under great tribulation, and scattered apart like to the twelve tribes; and that from the primitive times, in this uniform condition of paucity, and tribulation, and darkness; which, as was observed, those hundred and forty-four thousand in chap. xiv. are not, but do arise up to a greater light and victory, before the time of the New Jerusalem under the vials. Now how doth this agree with those poor, forlorn eastern Christians, whose churches have remained corrupt and dark, and overwhelmed with superstition and ignorance under all these times, and so but a few among them holy, and have been under these Moham-

medan tribulations a thousand years, the one half of them, and the other half two hundred years, and continue still to do so under the Turks, without any ease from misery, or restoring to light and beauty? And yet Christ hath had a company among them, though scattered and divided; for so they are parted into several sects and companies, as the Grecian and Armenian Christians, &c. And therefore God hath preserved among them the knowledge and profession of Christ, and of much more truth than is in the Romish church, in the dark times of it, to be found; which God sanctifies to some of them. And in that, according to all the best interpreters, this Turkish tyranny and tribulation is to continue, even till the New Jerusalem, —for the Turk is to be overthrown, to make way for the Jews, the kings of the east, under the sixth vial, and to be destroyed by the seventh,—how doth this accord also with this, that the state of these eastern saints is represented here to consist of so few, and those to be under great tribulation until the time of the New Jerusalem, as that which should prove their first deliverance; and when they come into the New Jerusalem, to be as it were but new come out of that great tribulation?

And the wonder that is made at this God's gracious dealings with a people so of all Christians forgotten, and not accounted of,—that ever they should be taken into this New Jerusalem,—doth further confirm it. For that the western churches, that have borne the heat of antichristian persecution, and overcome Antichrist, and shall in the end perfect their victory, and have set up temples, increasing more and more in light and glory, even until the New Jerusalem; that these should be made partakers of the New Jerusalem is no wonder, no strange thing; for they growing up unto it, it were strange if it should prove otherwise. And therefore, chap. xix. 1, &c., we find them, after the ruin of the whore, preparing themselves yet more for the marriage of the Lamb. But that these forlorn Grecians should be taken into it, among whom we scarce imagine any believers at all to be, this might well be made one of the greatest wonders of God's richest grace and mercy, and hath as much affected my heart to consider, since the time God led me into the thoughts of it, as anything through the whole book; that, as the prophet saith, this Ephraim should be his pleasant child, who would have thought it? But this is just like God, whose ways are unsearchable, and his works past finding out. And therefore one of the elders says here unto John, ver. 13, as provoking him to observe this passage, as much as anything in this book, 'What are these? and whence come they?' And John says unto him, 'Thou knowest;' and he said, 'These are they who come out of great tribulation,' and indeed the greatest tribulation that ever the servants of God were under.

And there are these probable likelihoods for this also, even according to the course of God's ways and dealings, for God to choose such a people from under so great tribulation, and who are of all the lowest; and *therefore*, or for this cause, as it is ver. 14, to make them partakers of so great a privilege, this is just like God, who loves to do acts of mercy which may justly set all the world a-wondering. And they having borne the heat of the day, and continued in the profession of Christ as well as we, reason is, they should be recompensed, and have their penny also. And they being seated in those very dominions where the Turk is seated, who is to be overthrown by or for the Jews, to make way for them to get possession of their own land, which lieth in those eastern countries, and in the midst of those nations, who are therefore called 'kings of the east,' chap. xvi. 12; how probable is it therefore that upon the ruin of the Turks they shall be thus

delivered, and that if any Gentiles be partakers of the Jews' privilege, those Christian Gentiles should, who have been oppressed by this their common enemy, and who dwell and inhabit in countries near and about the land of the Jews: especially if their land shall be made, as is thought by some, the chief seat of that fifth monarchy. Then surely, these nations that are nearest them are like most to partake the benefit and light of it; which also the prophets have foretold, that the Gentiles, yea, and these Gentiles, should walk in.

Lastly, If mention be not made of the Grecian churches here in this place, then there is none, or scarce any, according to the course of the best interpreters, in all this book. The book-prophecy is wholly taken up with the state of the western churches opposing Antichrist, chap. xiv.–xix., as being they whom God means chiefly to use for the ruining of that great Antichrist, among whom therefore he hath continued the knowledge of Christ, and the face of churches in the greatest power and purity; and therefore the Revelation speaks most of them. But yet, there having been a continuance of the profession of the Christian name in those Grecian and Armenian churches, even from the primitive times, and at this day their number amounting to as many as the professors in Europe do, notwithstanding Mohammedan incursions; can we think that God hath passed them over in silence in this book? Surely no. Seeing therefore that the book-prophecy is taken up with the western oppositions to the great Antichrist of the west, hence, most fitly, in this seal-prophecy, wherein the Mohammedan oppressors bear so great a part, does come in the representation of the state of those eastern Christians under Mohammed, Christ so keeping possession, both in the east and west. And the event hath been according to the prophecy. True believers have been, and yet are continued among them, even as our eyes may read in all stories of those eastern parts, and our ears have heard the report of to this day: whose *Confession of Faith* you may read, being printed in English, anno 1629, set forth by Cyril, the present patriarch of Constantinople; and you may, with joy, find it in all fundamental points as our own Confession is. See also *Field of the Church*, book iii., chap. 1–3, 5.

SECTION IV.

A short view of the 10*th and* 11*th chapters.—The ends for which the mighty angel* (i.e. *Christ*) *descended from heaven.—The seal-prophecy being closed, a new prophecy is given, which begins at the* 12*th chapter.*

Thus the seal-prophecy, under the visions of these seals and trumpets, having run over the story of all times, which concern the ruin of the Roman empire downward, from Christ's time even to our days,—for the miseries of the sixth trumpet still continue, and shall last till near the time of the seventh trumpet, which is to bring in the kingdom of Christ, chap. xi. 14, 15, with whose sounding this first seal-prophecy, as do all kingdoms and times, ends,—Jesus Christ therefore, in the likeness of a mighty angel, comes down from heaven; and that to a double end:—

First, To give the world and the church warning by an oath, that now time should be no longer, but till this woe of the sixth trumpet—that is, the Turks' dominion—should expire and pass away; as his speeches in the 10th chapter, ver. 6, 7, and in the 11th chapter, ver. 14, 15, compared together, do shew: 'And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are; and the earth, and the things that therein are; and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time

no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.' 'The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'

And, *secondly*, to give withal a new prophecy, this seal-prophecy being thus ended. Wherefore he now comes with the book *open* in his hand, which, chap. v., John saw *sealed*, the seals being now taken off, and the visions of them already past; which book contains another distinct prophecy to be given anew unto John, which therefore he is bidden to eat, as Ezekiel of old was, and he should be enabled to receive and write a new prophecy, as appears chap. x. 9, 11, 'And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.' 'And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.' Which new entire prophecy begins chap. xii., after this angel had further, by word of mouth, a while discoursed what should be the state and face of his purest churches in the western part, ver. 1, 2, in those last days, to which this seal-prophecy had brought John; namely, the times immediately, or not many years, before that seventh trumpet was to bring in his kingdom, and after that this angel had forewarned those churches of a great and sore conflict which they were to have with Antichrist towards the end of all; out of which they should rise again. And then comes the end of Antichrist, and of the Turk also. After he had given all this as a signal or warning to the church when the end should be,—all which he doth chap. xi. 1, and from ver. 7 to ver. 14,—then, I say, after that short digression made by this angel (Christ), who came principally to give John a new complete prophecy, doth that new book-prophecy begin in new visions, at the 12th chapter, which contains the fates that should befall the church in all ages from Christ's time, as the seal-prophecy had done those of the empire.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the book-prophecy, that begins at the 12th chapter.—An account of the general design of it.

THE state of the church, from Christ's time until the kingdom of Christ, may be divided into two:—1. The state of the church during the first four hundred years after Christ, usually called the *primitive times*. 2. The state of the church during the times of Antichrist, whom Jesus Christ is to destroy with the brightness of his coming.

1. The state of the church, during those first four hundred years, may be divided into its condition until the time of Constantine, the first Christian emperor; and the state of the church from his time, under the Arian emperors, and others Christian, until the rise of Antichrist, about a hundred years after the beginning of Constantine's reign. These were the two eminent various conditions of the church in those first four hundred years.

2. For the state of the church during the times of Antichrist, namely, the Popa, who succeeded the western emperor here in Europe,—for of the state of the church in the eastern part of the empire, especially under the Turks and Saracens, you formerly heard in the seal-prophecy, chap. vii., and therefore this book-prophecy speaks little of it, but, in a manner, only of the western church, which now indeed was made the more eminent stage, as for Antichrist, so for Christ to play his part upon;—this state of the church in the west, I say, was either—

(1.) That of the false pretended church, whereof Antichrist is and was the head; or—

(2.) The state of the true church under Antichrist, and during his time, whereof Jesus Christ is the head.

Now, answerably to this division are the ensuing chapters to be divided. The 12th chapter shews you the state of the church under the first four hundred years; and chap. xiii., xiv., &c., shew the state of the church afterwards, during Antichrist's times. These are the divisions of the state of the church from Christ's time hitherto.

And, first, this 12th chapter shews the face of the church in these primitive times, and that under those two forementioned eminent conditions:—

First, As under heathenish Rome until Constantine's time, when the empire turned Christian; from the 1st verse to the 13th, under the vision of a woman bringing forth a male child to rule all nations,—that is, a Christian emperor,—wherein she is opposed by a dragon, the devil, in the power of a heathenish emperor, endeavouring to devour her child.

The vision and appearance of this woman is such, and so glorious, as it fits no state of the church but that pure and glorious church of the primitive times. She is a woman, weak, yet glorious, as being clothed with the sun, (the righteousness of Christ;) crowned with a crown of twelve stars, (the twelve apostles;) her head, the first part of that church, having been honoured

with their preaching, and holding forth the light of their doctrine. She had the moon under her feet—she was above the world, and the rage of heathenish persecution, for 'they loved not their lives unto the death;' and, as a woman, all that while labouring in sore travail, under ten sore throes of persecution, yet labouring with God, day and night, in hopes and prayers in the end to bring forth and obtain Christian emperors, that should set Christ in the throne to rule with them, and throw down heathenism from the imperial throne, in which the devil ruled; the empire being all that while under the heathenish throne of Satan, and is therefore represented under a 'dragon having seven heads and ten horns,' which are ever in this book the character of the Roman empire. And it is now called the dragon, because Satan did openly and visibly act it. Now the throwing down the dragon from the throne, which was his heaven, and where he was worshipped as God, doth this woman in the end obtain, and prevails through the help of Michael (namely, Jesus Christ) and his angels, (the apostles and preachers of the gospel.)

And then, *secondly*, the state of the true church, when the Roman world was now turned Christian, for the first hundred years after Constantine; which church was also persecuted by Arian emperors, though Christians, and was like to have been ruined by the multitude of carnal professors; insomuch as she is presented as 'hasting to fly into a wilderness,'—that is, into a hidden, retired condition,—and in her flight, hath a flood of Arian persecution sent after her, to drown her, but that the earth, the Goths and Vandals, whom you heard of under the first trumpet, came in accidentally, by God's providence, and helped her, by breaking the Arian faction; which is the 'swallowing up the flood.' The Arians, though they professed Christ, yet they denied him to be God; into which heresy the whole empire fell, and persecuted the church for professing the contrary, as much as ever the heathen emperors had done. And this state of the church you have described from the 13th verse to the end of the 12th chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

The exposition of the 13th chapter, in which is set forth the state of the false church under Antichrist.—What his name, and the number of his name, denotes to us.—A short account of the time which some fix for his fall.

THE state of the church, and her conflicts with Satan the first four hundred years, being thus described, chap. xii., in the following chapters is set forth the state of the church from that time, during the times of Antichrist; all which time there was and is both his false antichristian church and the true church under him running along together. Now, the description of Antichrist (the Pope) and his false church, in his rise, power, greatness, and extent of his dominions, and of the company that should cleave to him, is set forth in the visions of the 13th chapter, which afterwards, in the 17th chapter, the Holy Ghost himself interprets and makes a comment on. And then the opposite company of the true church, who have the Lamb for their head, are described in the 14th chapter; and that in all those several states and conditions which during all that time they should run under, and this from the first rise of Antichrist until these very times wherein we live; with which, I take it, the visions of that 14th chapter do end.

First, for Antichrist and his church in the 13th chapter, and this set forth unto us under the vision of a twofold beast, which points at the Pope according to his double pretended claim of power and headship in the church; which is—

1. *Temporal;* which he claims over all kings and kingdoms, to depose and excommunicate them and their subjects at his pleasure. Unto which the ten kings and kingdoms of Europe, into which the western empire was now by the Goths reduced, did tacitly and with one consent submit themselves, and gave their power up, as you may read it interpreted, chap. xvii. 12–17. And so the Pope, together with the body of these ten kingdoms joining into one, whereof he becomes the head, is that first 'beast with ten horns,' described in this 13th chapter, ver. 1–11: which new beast is a true image of the former Roman monarchy in the 12th chapter; which being wounded and slain in the emperor's being deposed, is healed and restored to life again in this beast; and so the Roman monarchy comes still to continue, though under another head, namely, the Pope.

2. Besides this temporal power which he receives from the kings of these ten kingdoms, who in that respect do together with him make up one beast, he and his clergy do claim a *spiritual* power of binding and loosing, of pardoning sins, and of cursing men to hell, which is peculiar to Christ alone. And in that respect he, and the body of his false clergy with him, do make up another beast, having two horns like a lamb, as exercising that spiritual power of Christ, for which they and he are properly called *Antichrist;* and this description you have of him from ver. 11 to the end of this 13th chap-

...ties, ecclesiastical and temporal, is described
...spiritual beast, the Pope and his clergy, is he
...persuade the ten kings and their subjects to
...ay under him as their head, and is said to make
...east,—namely, of that dragon mentioned in the
...f the former heathenish empire, and the religion
...said to live again. For—
...becoming one under the Pope as their head, are
...government the image of the empire under one emperor
...Roman monarchy, in the joining of these ten kingdoms
...Pope, may be said still to continue. But besides—
...is called the image of the first beast, not simply in
...government and tyranny; but further, in a religious
...Pope and his clergy do mould the Christian religion,
...ess, and the worship thereof, into a true likeness
...heathenish religion, which the empire before was
...the Popish worship is but the translating of those
...those false gods, Jupiter, Apollo, &c., who were cast
...seal, were worshipped, into religious ceremonies in
...with they worship Christ and his saints. So as, were
...heathen Romans now alive, and should come into their
...and their priests in white, their processions, their sprink-
...their altars, tapers, images of saints departed, and their
...*Pontifex Maximus*, or great bishop and high priest,
...and say, This is just our old Roman heathenish
...is turned into Christ, and the priests of the gods of
...bishops, and our ancient gods, Mars, Janus, Æsculapius,
...departed, are changed for saints departed. So that the
...remains still, though there be a change of the gods
...Rabel of old made an image, and put to death all
...down before it, so hath mystical Babylon—for to that
...is the allusion—set up an image of the old heathenish
...and upon the like penalty enjoins the adoration of
...unity in worship, to all the subjects of these ten

...that cleave unto this beast, and may more or less be
...of him, are, as Mr Brightman hath well observed
...distinguished into three ranks of men in several degrees,
...acknowledging or cleaving to him, and to this his
...Some receive his mark or character; others his name
...of his name: but so as those who will not receive
...more or less, during the time that is allotted him
...nor sell;' that is, cannot subsist or abide in these
...This 'receiving of a mark,' &c., is a similitude
...Roman custom, which was to print on the forehead of
...their masters, and on the hands of soldiers the names
...generals. So these men that do belong unto this great
...this faction, do accordingly, more or less, receive that
...known to be his.
...*character*, as all priests and religious persons do,
...or others, who are this grand seigneur's janissaries,
...and Victorian band. Their doctrine is, that a man

l into holy orders doth, by his ordination, receive an indelible char- a secret invisible stamp or impress, which can never be rased out.
)thers receive his *name;* and so, though not in orders under him, cleave to him and his worship, as themselves openly profess that they , by suffering themselves to be called by his name, which is that y they own him. Thus as he is called *Papa*, the Pope, they profess lves *Papists*, or to be of the Pope as their head. And as he is called :x, they are called *Pontificii*. And even as Christ is called the 'high of our profession,' Heb. iii. 1, and so we accordingly called Christians ne profession of him; so the Pope being their pontifex, or high priest r profession, they, to shew so much, do hold forth the profession of y taking his very name, and in all things fully subjecting themselves im as his sons. But now—
What should be meant by the *number of his name?* That Mr Brightarries rightly to a company taking part with him, by a more remote f subjection; but he not knowing well whom to fasten it upon, in the poor Grecians, that are strangers unto him, and out of the on of any of his ten kingdoms; who, although they renounced all 'ledgment of the Pope for their head for many hundred years, yet t last, through sleights, and the baseness of one of their emperors, r with the conquest that the Europeans made of Constantinople for e, brought to yield a subjection thus far, as to acknowledge him for ead, and so were called Latins, or of the profession of the Latin , (which name I find some to this day, that are Popish Christians the Greeks, to be called by, by way of distinction from the other;) received, says he, the *number* of his name, Λατεῖνος, Latinus: the l letters whereof, in the Greek tongue, make six hundred and sixty- e number that follows in the last verse of this chapter. But this subjection of the Grecians, so remote, as it might be intended, for nore ancient times, yet withal I think that it is not only or princi- eant:—
, Because these Grecian Christians are not inhabitants within the tion of those ten kingdoms of Europe, the subjects whereof are mainly d, as being those 'inhabiters of the earth' that should be the wor- s of this beast, and cleavers unto him, ver. 8, 14; and so of them, ong them, must be found this number of his name, as well as those ceive his name.
, *secondly*, because the Christians in the west, who assist the pouring he vials, are as well said, some of them, to overcome the number of he, as others of them do his image, or idolatrous worship, or his char- f lying priests, or the beast himself; so chap. xv. 2. I take it, there- hat this number of his name must be found in Europe, in some of en kingdoms where that company are that pour out the vials.
, take the times of Popery before the Reformation,—that is, before e that Protestant kingdoms did first begin to cast off the Pope,—and were none that were suffered to have such a remiss, no, nor any lesser f owning the beast, but must all, as they did, receive his mark, or his and be professed Papists, coming to mass, acknowledging the Pope, rshipping his image; or they might not buy and sell, they might not ictly as others did. Therefore these that receive the number of his must be some generation of men risen up since, and that also within kingdoms, some of them, that have renounced the Pope. For within

the Popish dominions, unto this day, either the Inquisition suffers none to profess less than the receiving his name at least; or in others, those that are of Papists the most moderate yet receive the name of the beast at least, and so more than the number of his name.

But this number of his name seems to be a company that proceed not so far as to receive his character, professing themselves to be priests of Rome; nor to receive his name, for they do not profess themselves to be Papists; and yet are of the number of his name—that is, do hold and bring in such doctrines and opinions, and such rites in worship, as shall make all men reckon, account, or number them among Papists in heart and affection. And so they are of the number of his name; that is, in account such. They behave themselves so as they are, and deserve to be, accounted and esteemed Papists, and to aim at Popery, in the judgment of all orthodox and reformed Protestants, and that justly. For although their profession deny it, yet when their actions, and their corrupting of doctrine and worship shall speak it to all men's consciences, they cannot but judge that the Pope, and the fear of him, is before their eyes, as David speaks of wicked men. And as those in Titus, that profess they know God, yet in their works deny him, are justly accounted atheists; so those that shall profess the reformed religion, yet in all their practices and underhand policies depress it, and advance the Popish party, are justly to be accounted Papists, and to have received the number of his name.

The phrase, 'number of a name,' is not only taken for a name consisting of numeral letters, and so not only for number arithmetical; but the word 'number' is in many languages put for the account, reckoning, or esteem that is commonly had of men: as in Latin we say, he is one *nullius numeri*, of no number or account; and so among the Grecians, *ἐν πολέμῳ ἀναρίθμιος* is used by Homer for one in great account in war, being numbered or esteemed a soldier.

So then, number of a name is a common esteem or account to be such or such a one; and so the number of the beast's name here is the common repute or esteem to be a Papist, procured through underhand advancing of the Popish cause. It being therefore spoken in a distinct and lower degree from receiving his name or his mark, which note out an open profession, doth yet necessarily import so much inclining and cleaving to him, though secretly, as shall deserve that account and repute to be so numbered, as being indeed, tacitly and in heart, as truly of his company as those that receive his name. Now if in opening the meaning of the Holy Ghost in the phrase here, this description shall seem to the life to picture out a generation of such kind of Popish persons as these in any, even the most famous of the reformed churches, certainly there will not want good ground for it. For though they, with an impudent forehead, renounce the Pope's character and the name of Papists, and will by no means be called 'priests of Baal,' though priests they affect to be called, but boast themselves to be of the Reformation, and opposites to the Papal faction; yet with as much impudence do they bring in an image of Popish worship and ceremonies, adding to some old limbs, never cast out, other substantial parts, of altars, crucifixes, second service and the like, so to make up a full likeness in the public service to that of the Popish church. They bring in the carcase first, which may afterwards be inspired with the same opinions. And all this, not as Popery, or with the annexion of Popish idolatrous opinions, but upon such grounds only as upon which Protestants themselves have continued some other ceremonies.

And as in worship, so in doctrine, they seek to bring in a presence in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, beyond that which is spiritual to faith, which yet is not Popish transubstantiation; a power in priests to forgive sins, beyond that which is declarative, yet not that which mass-priests arrogate; justification by works, yet not so grossly as in the way of Popish merit, but as a condition of the gospel as well as faith; and many the like to these: thus truly setting up an image of old Popery in a Protestant reformed way, even as Popery is an image of heathenish worship in a Christian way. Say these men what they will, that they hold not of the Pope, nor any way intend him, or the introducing of his religion into these churches, yet their actions do, and cannot but, make all men number them as such; and therefore we say, they have gained that esteem at home and abroad in all the churches. And it is no more than what the Holy Ghost prophesied of, who hath fitted them with a description so characteristical, as nothing is more like them than this of these here who are said to receive 'the number of his name.'

And they doing this in a way of apostasy from their former profession and religion in which they were trained up, and in a church so full of spiritual light, where God hath more witnesses than in all the rest of the churches, and with an intention and conspiracy in the end to make way for the beast,—this going before, as the twilight doth serve to usher in darkness,—therefore the Holy Ghost thought them worthy of this character in this prophecy, and of a discovery of them unto whom they do belong; especially seeing they would so professedly deny it. And though haply but in one of the ten kingdoms,—although the Lutherans elsewhere look very like this description also,—yet seeing they were to grow so potent a faction as to have power to hinder the 'buying and selling,' quiet living of others amongst them, who will not receive this worship and doctrine, which is a new refined Popery, and with it the number of his name; that is, those opinions and practices which do deserve that esteem; and further, because they were to be the Pope's last champions before his fall, whom those that are the true saints (of whom the greatest number in the last age before the Pope's ruin is in, or belonging to that one kingdom) are to encounter and overcome before the ruin of Rome; therefore the Holy Ghost thought not fit to leave such a company out of the beast's number and followers: and that also although they were to continue but a short time. For the doom of these men we have in another prophecy, as their description also, 2 Tim. iii. 1–10: the prophecy there being of a generation of men to arise in the last days,—the Papists' rising is attributed to the *latter days* in 1 Tim. iv., but the rise of these to the *last* of the last days,—who shall set themselves principally against the power and spirit of true worship, and set up a form or image instead of it, ver. 5; but their doom is, ver. 9, 'These shall proceed no further,' they shall have a stop; and their folly, and madness, and hypocrisy, to attempt to bring in Popery with denying it, and when it is going down, then to build this Babel again, shall appear to all men; and being discovered, will be their overthrow. But notwithstanding, they must 'proceed further' than as yet they have done, even to the 'killing of the witnesses' in that kingdom, or tenth part of the city, as chap. xi. will shew, when in its due order it shall be opened. And because these last champions of the beast, and healers of the wound given him, should come in the last days of all, they are therefore last named, and are said to be last overcome by the witnesses and pourers forth of the vials, as chap. xv. 2.

There is but one seeming objection or difficulty in this interpretation; and

that is, that in the next verse the number of the beast is made six hundred and sixty-six.

But the answer and solution is, that the 'number of his name' in this verse is one thing, and the 'number of the beast' in the last verse is another. It is not said that the number of *his name* is six hundred and sixty-six, but the number of *the beast*, which betokeneth another thing, as we shall presently see. Only the Holy Ghost, by a wise transition, passeth from the mention of one unto the other, as agreeing in phrase of speech, yet differing in sense; which is frequent in Scripture, and particularly in this book; as, chap. xxii. 17, 'The Spirit and the bride say, *Come*,' as speaking unto Christ to come to judgment quickly, as ver. 20; but in the following words, 'Let him that is athirst *come*,' there the word *come* is spoken of the coming of a soul unto Christ, by believing, as unto the waters of life. Even so the number of the beast, and the number of his name, are here mentioned, the one upon occasion of the other, because of the affinity of the phrase in speech, yet to a differing sense.

Now the number of the beast in the last verse is the time or term of his ending; which is spoken in reference to the time allotted him for his reigning, ver. 5, which is to be, as there, forty-two months; which counting thirty days to a month, according to the Egyptian account, which is the account of this spiritual Egypt, is twelve hundred and sixty years from his first rising, being the same space that the church hath to lie hid in the wilderness, chap. xii. 6; which though she began to hasten into from Constantine's time, yet she first began to enter into her desolate condition, wherein she still remains, but then when the Pope's power began to rise. And during the same space of twelve hundred and sixty years, the witnesses are said to prophesy in sackcloth, chap. xi. 3; that is, in a mourning and mean condition; for the eminent professors of the truth, and opposers of the beast, who with their prophecy do feed the church in the wilderness all that while, as chap. xii. 6, these are the two witnesses, chap. xi. 3.

Which dates of time, both of the witnesses' casting off their sackcloth, the woman's coming out of the wilderness, and the beast's dejection from his kingdom and seat, (Rome,) will all expire about the same time; which some think will be about the year 1650, or 1656,—which if not the Pope's ruin, yet the Jews' call, as they say it to be,—or, at the furthest, in 1666; to which latter some incline, as thinking it probable that it may be the meaning of that account mentioned in the last verse of this 13th chapter, which doth cast up the number of the beast; that is, the date and period of his time and power, which was given him to continue forty-two months, as ver. 5: which days shall then be numbered, that is, finished, as the phrase is of old Babylon's ending, Dan. v. 26, 'God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it;' and this his number the Holy Ghost hath computed to be in the year that, according to man's computation, shall be called six hundred and sixty six. And for the confirmation of this interpretation, the word *number* is often put to express time; the very definition which the philosopher makes of time is, *numerus motus secundum prius et posterius*; it is the *number of motion*. And therefore Johannes Viterbiensis, in his gloss upon this place, plainly renders it thus: *numerus est illius tempus*,—'this his number is his time.' Therefore some have made this number to design out the year of the beast's beginning, or confirmation in his kingdom, in the year after Christ 666. But number, when it is put to signify time, doth not so properly signify the beginning of it, as the ending of it, when the number is finished and made complete, and cast up, as I may so speak; for then his time is numbered, and the account of it summed, and not before. And therefore Daniel, whose

s whose visions, this vision in this 13th chapter exactly follows,
s phrase to note out the ending of the time of a kingdom, and not
ming; 'thy days are numbered.' And, which is strange, Irenæus
who was the first that interpreted this six hundred and sixty-six to
he numeral letters of Λατεινος, as the name of this Latin kingdom,
ıal seem to think that the end of the times of the beast should in a
be hiddenly contained, (*Adver. Hæreses*, lib. v., towards the end of
:) *refert hunc numerum* 666, *ad sexies millenos annos mundi in*
it) *diabolica malitia consummabitur*. He mistakes indeed, refer-
o the six thousandth year of the world, according to the old tradi-
he Rabbins, commonly received among the fathers; but yet in this
, that it should signify the time of the consummation and ending
ast's reign and the devil's malice, as that which is to determine with
f the world.

observe the Holy Ghost puts an especial wisdom on it, to reckon
ber; which if it had lain in numeral letters only, had been no great
wisdom to have such an emphasis put upon it; the like whereof is
once more in this book, and that in chap. xvii. 9, when the beast,
time of his rising with the ten kings, is set forth, as there, from the
e 12th verse; and so now here, when his ending is spoken of: for
om indeed lay in reckoning the time of his beginning with the ten
ıd so the time of his ending, by computing the whole time of his
elve hundred and sixty years.

ılgar computation of years kept now in the world is, as we all know,
year of Christ's birth, by an account from which we difference one
ı another. And that is the style of the whole Christian world, to
a year of our Lord, reckoning from Christ. And this computation
the 'number of a man,' for it is the ordinary vulgar way of reckon-
, and the measure of time used by men; and therefore so called, in
ı doth use so to number the years. Even as the measure of the
he city, chap. xxi. 17, is said to be a hundred and forty-four cubits,
ıg to the measure of a man,'—that is, the ordinary cubits in use with
aken from the proportion of the measure of man's stature: so here,
, the beast's year of ending, when his number shall be complete, will
e year which, according to man's computation of the years from
ıall be ordinarily termed 666. Now the number of the thousand is
ioned, as in vulgar phrase among the Greeks and Hebrews it seldom
her among other nations is it ordinarily used to this day; we using
ı '88, for 1588. And here especially it was needless; for if his
was to end in a year which, according to man's account, should
. 666, it could be no other, according to them, but that of 1666
rist; for the year 666 after Christ, which is past, it could not be,
ng not two hundred of his years allowed him to continue, as then
; and in the year 2666, to come, the years allotted him would have
ll-nigh doubly run out, his years from his first rising to this his
ming to be but twelve hundred and sixty years.

hen, according to this their account, so as to end his time in 1666,
of rising must begin in the year 406 after Christ; and that the
se did about that time begin, we are not altogether without the
ost's warrant, who tells us, that the Roman empire, seated at Rome,
west, must begin to be taken away, ere this man of sin could be
er come up and appear in the world, 2 Thess. ii. 7, 8. And it was
m empire which was that which letted, whereof Rome itself was

the head and seat; and therefore the Holy Ghost affixeth this empire to the city of Rome as the seat of it, which he calleth *seven-headed*, in respect of her seven hills, and so meaneth not that eastern empire, whereof Constantinople was the seat. Now this western empire, whose seat was Rome, began then to be taken away, and the first foundation of its ruin laid, when the Goths and Vandals, of whom you heard under the trumpets, began to break that empire into these ten kingdoms; and the beginning of the first kingdom broken off from the empire was in the year 410, the emperor by covenant allowing the Goths to set up a kingdom in France. Then was Rome also first sacked and taken by those barbarous nations, and first lost her virginity; and Honorius the emperor, to recover Rome again, and restore it to her former flourishing estate, was forced to part with one piece of the empire, namely France, which was the first of all the ten kingdoms that were broken off. And in the year 412, he was forced to grant to the Huns to do the like. And anno 415, he was forced to grant the like to the Goths in Spain.* And by the year 456, all the ten were up who gave their power to the beast. And this punctually agrees with what the Holy Ghost says more expressly of the very hour of Antichrist's rising, chap. xvii. 12: that the ten kings should begin to receive power as kings, one hour with the beast, and the beast one hour with them; the Holy Ghost reckoning from the beginning of the first of these ten kingdoms the rising of the beast, because therein was laid the first foundation of his empire over these ten kingdoms, for they were to set him up. And, which is strange, Jerome, who lived in the times of this first incursion of these barbarous nations, and wrote so complainingly of it, who died about the year 420, when he saw Rome taken, and the Goths obtain pieces of the western empire, said, then in those times when it was a-doing, in his Epistle *ad Gerontium: Qui tenebat de medio fit, et non intelligimus antichristum appropinquare.* He seeing the empire begin to break, said, Antichrist must needs be at hand.

Some read μετα τὸ θηρίον, as importing the rise of these ten kingdoms, to be *after* the beast first risen: which, if meant of the time when these ten horns were completely grown up, is true; for in nature the horns grow up after the birth of the beast that beareth them. But whether it be *after* the beast, or *with* the beast, it was but *one hour after* the beast, or *one hour with* the beast; still implying, that both the rise of the one and of the other were near in time, and in the same age. And if the time be reckoned from the very first rise of that first kingdom in France, granted unto the Goths, anno 410, it will appear that it fell out together, or not an hour after the rise of that beast, from whose time the centurists and others have made the birth of the beast to have been, though his conception were before.

And indeed it so happened, through God's providence, who made all things concur in this one hour, that he who was as then Pope, namely Innocentius I.,—created Pope, as some say, anno 404, some 406,—began to usurp and challenge jurisdiction over all churches, (as I could out of many authorities shew, but you may see it in Simpson's *History of the Church*, in English, Book ii., 5th century,) and did set on foot that famous falsification of the canons of the Nicene Council, as pretending that they gave these bishops of Rome that power; for which there is an epistle of this Innocentius among the epistles of Augustine, (Epist. 91,) where he writing to Augustine, and the rest of the African bishops assembled, challengeth power over all, *ex patrum illorum institutis*, from the decrees of those fathers of Nice, which his successors afterwards prosecuted: so that a copy out of the

* See Sigonius de Imperio Occidentali, lib. x., xi.

ntic records of that council, held in the time of Constantine, was sent y which this falsification was detected. This man also began first to ıte a power over princes; for he excommunicated the eastern emperor, lius, who yet was out of his jurisdiction, for banishing Chrysostom, no bishop of Rome before him had ever adventured to do, and this in ar 407, the copy of whose bull of excommunication is extant to this given at length in Baronius. In his time also, the Emperor Honorius d the clergy an exemption from secular power and civil tribunals; so g them a distinct body for the Pope, their head. See here the first cond beast in this chapter rising both together: first in this Pope's usurping over churches and princes, and then in exempting his clergy, ke up and constitute that second beast, with him as their spiritual and the ten kingdoms which were to constitute the first beast, under pe as their head, then also beginning to arise.

I thus I have given an account of their opinion who fix the time of rist's fall in 1666; together with the arguments which they urge to it.

CHAPTER VIII.

The exposition of the 14th chapter, wherein the state of the true church under Antichrist is described.

As in the 13th chapter you have the false antichristian church, whereof the Pope is the head, so in this 14th chapter begins the description of the true church during the time of Antichrist, whereof the Lamb is the head: which church is made up of that 'seed of the woman' mentioned chap. xii. 17; whom, during her lying hid in the wilderness, Satan through Antichrist's power did persecute. Now the several conditions of the church, during those times of Antichrist unto this day, may be reduced to three heads:—

1. The state of true believers in those darker times of Popery, when they were mingled with Papists, as making no open separation from them, and yet preserving themselves pure from much of their idolatrous worship and opinions; and this during the space of seven hundred years from the Pope's rising.

2. The state of the church when first a separation began to be made from the church of Rome, and the gospel to be preached, from the year 1100.

3. The state of the church under the Reformation since the times of Luther and Calvin, for these last hundred years.

Into these three several states the church of God doth eminently fall divided, to the view of any that are skilled in ecclesiastic stories. And these three states are lively deciphered in this chapter.

1. The state of that confused company under Antichrist's first times ver. 1–6.

2. The church's first separation from the company of Antichrist, in three several degrees of it, ver. 6–14.

3. The state of the Reformation since Calvin's time, ver. 14 to the end.

First, The state of believers mingled among Antichrist's company, and not setting up churches distinct from those under him, though opposing the grossness of his idolatry, and keeping themselves pure from it. And these are set forth in characters suitable to that condition. They are a scattered company of a hundred and forty-four thousand, joining themselves to the Lamb Christ, having his Father's name written in their foreheads,—that is professing the true God, in the sincere obedience and worship of him,—whilst the opposite company of Antichrist went 'wondering after the beast,' even the *world* of them, as chap. xiii. 3, and received his mark, ver. 17. These are set forth by the same number of a hundred and forty-four thousand that the Christians in the east, under the Mohammedan bondage and darkness, are who were the fifth and sixth trumpets, their state and condition being much alike in this, as they are a company of persons singly to be numbered and scattered up and down, here and there, as they were, in the midst of the corruptions of those eastern churches, under the darkness and oppression of Mohammedanism. So in like manner, these are a company of true believers

scattered up and down under the growing superstitions and increasing darkness of Popish antichristianism; which, until the year of Christ 1100, did increase more and more upon the world. They stand upon Mount Sion, which was called the city of David; as not yet having a temple, or instituted churches distinct from Antichrist, erected and built, as in David's time Mount Sion had not. And though they sung a 'new song,'—the truth of the gospel which themselves believed,—yet so confusedly and indistinctly, as none could learn it, or understand that they differed from them. It was a new song, differing from what the Papists taught about Christ; yet they did not propagate it to many; there were few or none, it is said, that could learn it. And they are said to sing it secretly, before this representative chorus of the four beasts and the four-and-twenty elders,—as they are considered as a standing company, that do view all the visions of this book,—but themselves were not cast into such an order of worship, they not having churches or officers to begin the song, as in other times you may observe that it is said, the four beasts began, and the four-and twenty elders sung that song. So that they had no distinct churches and assemblies, nor officers of their own who sung this song; their voices being sometimes as the voice of many waters confusedly murmuring against the superstitions daily arising in those times, and thundering aloud. First, against setting up of images, anno 707, both in France and Germany; and then, against transubstantiation: sometimes sweetly harping melodious strains of true devotion, which believers, and some writers of those times, as we in their writings find, were full of. Those kept themselves virgins from the gross idolatries of the whore, not defiling themselves with the rest of those women; by which are meant the daughters of the whore,—that is, those cities and kingdoms in which they lived,—which (as the daughters receiving themselves the fornications of Rome, the mother city) allured these also unto spiritual fornication with them. Thus during these times of gross idolatry, we read of those who professed their detestation of images, and that idol of transubstantiation.

The *second* state of the church is, that of the separation which believers made from antichristian churches, having a new and a further light broke forth among them; which we have described unto us by three degrees, rising higher and higher, presented under three several angels, from the 6th verse, and so on, according to the usual course of this book: the first of which flies in the midst of heaven, being to publish his message unto many nations, having the gospel to preach; that is, Jesus Christ, and justification by him, and the true worship of him: which in those times was counted a new gospel; therefore in opposition to that made calumny, the Holy Ghost here calls it the everlasting gospel. And this began to be done about the year 1100.

But because I mean to begin the *Second Part* of this my Exposition of this book with the story of the church's first separation from Popery, which here begins at the 6th verse of this chapter; therefore I reserve the particular exposition thereof unto that Second Part in its due place, and break off this *First Part* here, although in the middle of a chapter, yet at a right joint or period.

PART II.

BEING THE STORY OF THE CHURCH FROM THE TIMES OF THE FIRST SEPARATION FROM THE BEAST, THE POPE, UNTIL THE GLORIOUS KINGDOM OF CHRIST;

AS IT IS LAID DOWN CHAP. XI., AND FROM CHAP. XIV. 6 UNTO THE BEGINNING OF CHAP. XX.

THE PREFACE.

THE main thing I aimed at, both in my first studying this book, and also in this my exposition of it, was to search into such passages therein as did concern and fall upon the last days, especially the present times of the church; and to inquire and find out under which of these constellations our own times do fall, and what is certainly yet to come. Now, what hitherto hath been expounded by me I found, by the general consent of the best expositors, though upon diverse grounds, to belong unto more ancient times, long since past. And hence it is that, in the exposition of those 6th, 8th, and 9th chapters, I have been the less inquisitive, therein especially following Mr Mede, whose scheme and division also of this whole prophecy into the *Seal-prophecy* and *Book-prophecy*, and making the one to contain the fates of the empire and the other of the church, I ever accounted a happy notion for the understanding of this book, and have therefore enlarged it; although, in the exposition of the 7th chapter, I altogether differ from him, as also in some few things else. Now, those parts of this prophecy which belong to more elderly times being thus briefly run over and despatched, I have now selected and singled out all that I find, both in the seal-prophecy and in this book-prophecy, to have an eye to these present times, or to those yet to come, and have cast them apart by themselves, as being those things in this book which it concerns us more especially to search into. And to the end that I might begin at a right joint, without mangling the whole, I have chosen to begin from that state and time of the church's separation from Popery, and of the Reformation, which this book-prophecy begins at,—namely, chap. xiv. 6,—and so to give upon this, but especially what concerns the present age, a larger exposition than upon the former I have done: having written that *First Part*,

especially that brief exposition of the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters, but to make way for the understanding of that which now follows; it being impossible for any man to be confirmed in the true interpretation of any part without some general insight into the whole.

Now, in general, if you would know what belongs to these latter times in this prophecy:—

1. The seal-prophecy, from the 6th chapter to the 12th, running over all time from John's days unto the kingdom of Christ, and the passages thereof in the 10th and 11th chapters, (being the last under that first prophecy,) do therefore belong unto the last times, as hath been abundantly declared in that general scheme given in the First Part; and, indeed, most of the things in the 11th chapter do belong to the times of the vials, chap. xvi., as will appear in the exposition of it. Then, again—

2. At the beginning of the 6th verse, chap. xiv., in the book-prophecy, begins the great restoration of the gospel from under Popery, and so the story of the last days, which is continued along in such things as shall befall the church unto the kingdom of Christ, which begins not until chap. xx. Hence, therefore, all these passages in those chapters mentioned out of both prophecies, being put together in their due place and order, do fitly fall in together, to make the story of the church complete, from the first separation from Popery unto Christ's kingdom; and do indeed take in all that in this book of the Revelation is spoken of these times: which, therefore, I call a *Second Part* of the exposition of this book.

A particular scheme and division, presenting, in their due order and succession, all the contents of those chapters which do concern our times.

Because the right ordering and ranking of the particular visions of this book in both prophecies in their due times, either of succession after each other, or their synchronising or falling out together at the same time, is the chief key of interpretation; therefore, as I gave a more general scheme and division of this whole book at the first, to make way for the exposition thereof, so I will now premise a particular scheme of these chapters mentioned, so to make way for the understanding of the exposition thereof also.

First therefore I will set together the materials therein contained, according to that right and due order, either of synchronising each with other, or due succession after each other; that is, shew what times the several visions of those chapters do belong unto; which of them are, in order of time, before the other, and which fall out at the same time with other. The full proof of which method, and my so ordering them, I shall in part reserve to the larger exposition itself, which follows; only now take it briefly, for the better clearing the exposition.

Two representations of the church, from the separation to the New Jerusalem.

The church of Christ, from those times of separation unto the New Jerusalem, is presented, either—

I. In the various conditions which in itself it should run through, all the time until then, in several ages, both in respect of the progress of its separation further and further off from Rome, and so of its increase of light, purity, and reformation; as likewise in respect of persecutions and judgments upon it, and its restitution and deliverance again from under them. Or else—

II. It is presented in one uniform, entire, and general condition, suiting with all those times of it, first and last, both as within itself it partakes of like privileges all that time, and especially also in relation to the execution of plagues and punishments, poured out of the seven vials, on the enemy of the church, whom this true church is to be the instrument of ruining. And both these ways the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to represent the story of it.

The church's uniform and alike condition entirely set forth together in the 15th and 16th chapters.

This same entire condition of it, during all this long time, as I take it, is set forth in the 15th and 16th chapters.

1. In the 15th chapter is set forth the common, uniform, and like state of the church all that while—

(1.) As within itself, ver. 2–5.

(2.) In the common and like description of the angels or powers out of the vials which come out of those churches, from ver. 6 to the end. Which representation of the church, and of these angels, all that whole time, is also made as the immediate sign, great and wonderful, or the forerunner, of the New Jerusalem, ver. 1, 2. There being after these vials, and this state of the church, a more glorious state of it to come; which, ver. 5, is called the opening the temple of the tabernacle, (so called by way of distinction from the temple of the seven angels,) as wherein the ark, Christ himself, is to be seen, as chap. xi. 19; which, until the vials are all poured out, stands veiled, as the holy of holies did. And so this present state of the church, which is the temple out of which the seven angels come forth, ver. 6, holdeth but the proportion and allusion of the inward court of the priests unto the holy of holies in the Jewish temple, in comparison unto that other church or temple to come after this, as ver. 5 speaks. And so the erection of it is made the sign or immediate forerunner of this holy of holies, as ver. 1, 5, compared, do evidently shew. And then—

2. In the 16th chapter, you have the execution and pouring out of these seven vials by the angels out of this church or inner temple, erected from the first separation from Antichrist, all along those times unto the New Jerusalem; which, in their several orders and successions, are in one view exhibited in that 16th chapter.

The various condition of the church scatteredly presented in three parts.

Now, although this common, uniform condition of the church all this time is set thus, in relation to the execution of those vials on the enemies, in one entire view, in the 15th and 16th chapters; yet that other various con-

dition of the church, as in respect to its own particular and diverse state in all those times, the Holy Ghost was pleased variously, and in several places of this prophecy, to describe and set forth, as best suiting to a special end and occasion, yet with such infallible characters of their times, of the vials they belong unto, and also unto what times of each vial, as cannot deceive us.

Thus, the *first* part of the story of the various condition of the church during the four first vials is set forth, chap. xiv., from the 6th verse to the end; at which 6th verse the separation of the true church from Antichrist beginning, there began also the first erection of true churches, or the temple, first made mention of in that chapter, when Waldus and his company first fell off from Rome. And the reason why this was first done, ere the vision of the vials was presented, was because it was meet to shew how the temple was first built and reared, ere the seven angels and their vials poured forth out of this temple should be mentioned. And therefore chap. xiv. shews that first part of the church's story in all its first comings forth from Antichrist, and laying the foundation of churches; but then it breaks off at the times of the fourth vial, for that so far precedes the reformation of the true church, as it respected a separation from Antichrist, and so runs along with such vials as should by degrees first prepare for his ruin, as the three or four first vials do.

But then the *next* state of the church, from the time of the fourth vial to the fifth vial, when Antichrist's time of forty-two months is to expire; that the 11th chapter, which comes in as a chronology to shew the end and expiring of those times of Antichrist, doth supply the story of it, ver. 1–14. And this story comes in there, rather than here in chap. xiv., because that was to be as an immediate signal of Antichrist's downfall; and so comes in most fitly there in that 11th chapter; that chapter being intended as an exact chronology or computation of the times of the beast's reign, to the end it might be discerned when his time should end: and so the immediate sign before it is therefore annexed, for the church's warning and comfort against the approaching of the time of his ending, and a fatal prevailing of Antichrist over them just before. And so the story of that 11th chapter doth indeed begin where that 14th chapter endeth, or about the same time. And as the 14th chapter presented us with the story of the reformation of the church from Antichrist and his false church, and so what befell the church during that time; so the 11th chapter begins with a new reformation of the reformed churches among themselves, and what should befall them upon that reformation—namely, the killing the witnesses between the fourth vial and the fifth, or, at the utmost, before the sixth vial.

And then the *third* part of the church's story, from after the fifth vial until the New Jerusalem,—which New Jerusalem begins chap. xx. of the book-prophecy, and chap. xi. 15 of the seal-prophecy,—the 19th chapter presents us with in its due place: for the 17th and 18th chapters being, the one but an explanation who was the beast, and where his seat was, that so the church might be able to discern this Antichrist; and the other being a funeral-song for the pouring out of the fifth vial, when the seat of the beast,

the whore, (the city described in the 17th chapter,) is ruined, when also Antichrist's kingdom, as it is most probable, doth end: therefore fitly, after both these digressions, comes in, in its due order, the state of the church from the time of that fifth vial, or the ruin of the city, unto the New Jerusalem. And therefore the 19th chapter thus begins, 'And after these things, I heard the voice of an innumerable company,' &c.,—that is, after the ruin of the city and whore described in chap. xvii., and ruined, chap. xviii.,—and so goes on to describe the state of the church then until the New Jerusalem.

Now to sum up all. As the story in the 14th chapter containeth the first reformation and separation of the church from Antichrist in several degrees, and the 11th chapter containeth a second reformation of the church within itself from profane mixture; so this 19th chapter contains a third reformation personal, of the saints themselves in it, as then with might and main preparing and adorning themselves for the marriage of the Lamb, which then they shall evidently see approaching, now when the whore is cast off and burnt; and there you may see them getting all the fine linen they can,—that is, of holiness and growth in grace, 'the righteousness of the saints,'—that so their Lord and Husband might greatly delight in their beauty, as you may see, ver. 7, 8. And this is the true general coherence and order of what yet remains to be interpreted.

The particular synchronism of the several visions and contents of all those chapters: and, first, of the 14*th chapter, from ver.* 6, *with the* 15*th and* 16*th, to its* 8*th verse.*

Now because, according to this division and general scheme given, the visions of the 15th and 16th chapters, namely, those of the vials, do run along the same whole course of time through diverse ages that the visions of the 14th chapter, from ver. 6, and also of the 11th chapter, to ver. 15, and of the 19th chapter also, do, (though the one in a uniform continued way, the other in a scattered successive representation of the church's condition, all along the same tract of time through many ages:) therefore it will be expedient to shew which of these several parts of these two representations do synchronise and fall out together in the same age, and which of them do succeed each other.

I will therefore a little more particularly set together the several parts of these stories; both of that of the seven vials, which are put together, chap. xv., xvi., and those other several pieces and scattered passages of those other chapters, in all their due times as they fell out together.

1. That same temple filled with smoke, chap. xv. 8, out of which come the seven angels, I conceive to have been begun to be set up in the times of the first separation from Antichrist, chap. xiv. 6. When also the everlasting gospel was begun distinctly to be preached, both by Waldus and his followers, who did erect true churches unto Christ, (as the history of the Waldenses shews,) when those harpers on the glassy sea, chap. xv., began more distinctly to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb; that is, the doctrine both of the law and gospel, which the hundred and forty-four thousand, in the darker

times of Popery, had but muttered, and that so confusedly as none could learn it. For this, compare chap. xiv. 6, 7, with chap. xv. 3, 4. So that the doctrine of the gospel, and the erection of the temple out of which the vials do come, and the separation from Popery, do all begin together.

2. This erection of the temple, and preparation being thus made by the first angel, chap. xiv. 6, the first vial out of that temple, chap. xvi. 1, 2, began with the voice of the second angel, chap. xiv. 8. So that the first angel, chap. xiv. 6, sets up the temple, and the second angel brings forth the first vial. And therefore, accordingly, the voice of that angel, chap. xiv. 8, is, 'Babylon is fallen, Babylon is fallen;' that is, now is the first foundation of her ruin laid, (as in opening the vials I shall afterward shew,) or, now do those vials begin which shall be her ruin.

The second vial, chap. xvi. 3, follows with the voice or cry of the third angel's preaching, chap. xiv. 9, then when the sea of Antichrist's doctrine was both proved and pronounced damnable by Luther's doctrine, and the waters which the whore sat on fell from her; that is, those kingdoms and commonwealths which had subjected themselves unto her. For this, compare the year of Luther's preaching, recorded chap. xiv. 9–11, and that second vial, chap. xvi.

The third vial, chap. xvi. 4, hath been pouring out since that harvest began, chap. xiv. 14, since the summer weather and settled peace of the reformed churches, meant by rivers and fountains, as in the opening the meaning of that vial will appear.

The fourth vial, chap. xvi. 8, I take it, began about the time of the vintage, chap. xiv. 18, whereof this to me is an infallible character, that an angel who had power over fire is said to excite unto it. Now, chap. xvi. 8, the fourth angel, who poured out this fourth vial, is said to have 'power given him to scorch men with fire.' And so that description, chap. xiv. 18, is of the same angel, to shew that these two (the fourth vial and this vintage) fall in the same times: and so it is evidently evinced that the 14th chapter, and the times of it, reach but to the fourth vial.

The synchronism of the vision of the 11*th chapter, in the age between the fourth and fifth vial; and of the* 17*th and* 18*th chapters, with the times of the fifth vial; and of the* 19*th, with the age after the fifth vial unto the New Jerusalem.*

Come we next to the 11th chapter:—

Which, *first*, under the seal-prophecy, begins (now about the times of the fourth vial) before the expiration of the world's monarchy, Antichrist's times, and the church's oppression, and before the seventh trumpet, which blows, ver. 15. And it begins with the representing the temple of the reformation, the same which the 14th chapter had represented, (out of which the angel, with his sickle for the harvest, did come, chap. xiv. 15,) in which these reformers, who erected that temple in the 14th chapter, having committed this error, to lay an outward court unto it,—John there bearing the persons of the godly of this age,—are bidden to measure that temple

anew, as not fully conformed to the pattern, and to cast out the outward court. And so it contains a further reformation of the temple in that 14th chapter erected. And as in the vintage, chap. xiv., the Popish Gentiles had, as was said, trod down the grapes in Germany; so here, chap. xi. 1, the like outward court in other churches elsewhere is given unto these Gentiles to tread down, and so with that exploit to end their date of treading down the holy city for forty-two months, (or 1260 years,) with this their re-entry, which shall be their last upon the churches of the Reformation. And so you see the 11th chapter begins where the 14th chapter ends.

Then, *secondly*, ver. 5, 6 of that chapter, in the description of the witnesses, you furthermore expressly have the first four vials briefly summed up; and no more of them than the first four mentioned therein, to shew that these witnesses, in these latter times of their prophecy, are the same with those angels that pour out the vials, chap. xvi. And observe, that that mention of them comes in but by way of parenthesis in this speech of the angel unto John, that he might discern who they were, and know them again in this new book-prophecy; and all to this end, to shew what after these four vials, or from the time of the fourth and before the fifth, should befall them in the expiring of the 1260 years allotted them to prophesy in, in sackcloth, or in a mourning condition; which now should end with the beast's reign also, which ends with the fifth vial. And so, ver. 7, when they shall be about to finish their testimony,—that is, just now, at the ending of their prophecy,—they that formerly have had the power to execute four such vials on the beast's company already, must now, before they do fatally darken and overcome his kingdom by the fifth vial, be themselves once more overcome by the beast. Which killing of them, being thus mentioned after four of the vials, summed up, ver. 5, 6, and in the end of their prophecy, and in the very expiring of their time of mourning, must needs therefore be from after, or upon the time of the fourth vial, and before the fifth, or at furthest with the sixth. And then, ver. 13, the witnesses, they rise, and the tenth part of the city falls, which some have interpreted to be the fifth vial, the ruin of the city of Rome. But of that hereafter in the exposition.

After that, ver. 14, the second woe passeth away, which notes the removing of the Turkish power and tyranny,—which was the second woe, or sixth trumpet, spoken of chap. ix. 12, 13,—which is all one with the sixth vial, chap. xvi., the drying up the river Euphrates, or the preparation unto it; as in the exposition will appear.

Then follows the seventh trumpet, chap. xi. 15 to the end; at which time the seventh vial begins, as is evident by comparing chap. xi. 9 and chap. xvi. 18–21, as also chap. x. 7, in that it is said in one place that 'time shall be no longer' than until the seventh trumpet blows, and in the other, 'It is done,' says the voice, when the seventh vial is poured out, chap. xvi. 17.

And, *lastly*, as under the seventh trumpet comes in the holy of holies, which, as was said, is the opening the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven, in which the ark is seen, chap. xi. 18; so you may read, chap. xv. 5, that after the vials, (he says there, μετὰ ταῦτα, 'after these things,') this temple of

the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven is said to be opened. That temple out of which the vials come being but as the inward temple which was begun to be erected,—for else they had no true churches,—from the first separation, but polluted with the adjoining of the outward court by the reformers. But under the times of the fourth vial, this temple is measured and purged, and that court cast out, chap. xi. 1, now ending in the holy of holies succeeding it.

But whereas still what should befall the church from the time of the rising of the witnesses,—which falleth out about the fifth vial,—is not expressed in that 11th chapter, nor what should be the church's condition from that space between the fifth vial and the seventh trumpet and holy of holies; but we are still to seek that, for the 11th chapter does setly describe only what befell the church just before the expiring of the reign of Antichrist, as a signal added for the church's warning: therefore this part the 19th chapter supplies,—the 17th and 18th chapters being but a larger explication of the fifth vial, as all agree, namely, the ruin of the city,—the first verse of which begins thus, 'After these things, I saw an innumerable company in heaven, praising God for the downfall of the whore,' (at large set forth chap. xvii., xviii.,) and therefore it must needs set forth the state of the church now after the fifth vial until the seventh, as in the exposition will appear. And then that great battle at the Lamb's marriage-supper, which follows in that chapter, how that agrees with the seventh vial, let any one judge that shall read chap xvi. from the 14th verse to the end, and chap. xix. from the 11th verse to the end. And then come in the thousand years, and New Jerusalem, chap. xx.–xxii., which is all one with the holy of holies.

CHAPTER I.

The 13th chapter explained, from the 6th verse to the end.

Now having ordered and cast these chapters, remaining to be expounded, into this mould, I begin this exposition here, where the story of the church's first separation from Antichrist doth indeed begin, where also I brake off the First Part of this exposition.

In which my ranking of these chapters was shewed, that as the 13th chapter does throughout set forth the condition of the false antichristian church, and the several sorts of that company which shall cleave to the beast, so that this 14th chapter does in like manner set forth the company of true believers, which shall apart by themselves cleave unto the Lamb, and that in those several conditions which they are to run through. As—

1. The condition of the church in the dark times of Popery, from his first rising until the gospel's light did break forth more clearly, and a separation was made from the church of Antichrist. And this, as I have opened it, you have from the 1st verse unto the 6th. Or—

2. The condition of the church from that first separation from Popery, and believers erecting churches and assemblies by themselves, from ver. 6 to the end. Which now begins to be expounded.

And the scope of the Holy Ghost in this remainder of chap. xiv. is but to shew by what degrees the gospel should first break forth, and how churches should at first be erected and a glorious reformation made. And so it reacheth no further than till the times of that prevailing again of the beast, which after this great reformation he should a second time obtain to have over these churches, about the times of the fourth vial, which is executed by the angel that hath power over fire, who is mentioned ver. 18. Which prevailing of his, the 11th chapter (the scope whereof is to shew how the beast's reign is to end) does more fully shew forth.

Now when as the Holy Ghost had in this 14th chapter given the story of that first separation and reformation, as being sufficient to shew the foundation and progress of this new temple and true church, erected in opposition to the false, he then breaks off, and presents the general and common condition and station of believers in this new erected temple, separate from the church of the beast and from its doctrine and worship, and shews the judgments to be executed upon the false church all that while, until the kingdom of Christ, entirely together in one view, in the 15th and 16th chapters.

Now this state and condition of the church, as first breaking forth from under Antichrist, and so coming out of Babylon and Egypt, laid forth in this 14th chapter, until Antichrist's second prevailing, spoken of chap. xi., hath two parts:—

1. Their first separation, in the dark and elder times of the gospel, before the Reformation.

2. The Reformation itself, made by Calvin and others.

1. The first separation, made and continued in the elder times before Luther, hath three degrees of it orderly set forth, as light increased in the church, from ver. 6 to 14.

2. The Reformation itself, from the 14th verse to the end.

First, Of that first separation :—

It hath three degrees, as was said, set forth by three angels, as by whose ministry all the great things done in the church and world throughout this book are still said to be effected, who in their voice and cry rise higher and higher, and louder and louder, against Antichrist and his company.

The first angel, who lays the foundation of all, is said to have the 'everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tongue, and people,' and so to 'fly into the midst of heaven,' as reaching his voice to all. And he also calls upon men to fear and worship God alone, who made heaven and earth, ver. 7. So that the matter of his preaching is the gospel, which brings to light the free grace of God in Christ for the justification of a sinner, and also the true worship of this God alone; withdrawing men from idolatry and false worship of saints and angels, which the world was then overwhelmed with: which because in those times it was called the *New Gospel*, therefore, in opposition to that calumny, the Holy Ghost calls it the *Everlasting Gospel*, which was now restored and brought to light. And by the preaching of these two things to all nations, was the foundation of that whole separation from the Pope that followed first laid.

Now this first angel's preaching doth most lively set forth the first proceedings of Waldus and his followers, who first began to make separation from Popish doctrine and worship. This Waldus, an alderman of Lyons in France, about the year of Christ 1100, being converted by occasion of the sudden death of a friend of his, as they were walking abroad together,—which mightily terrified and amazed him, God using that as a means to humble him and bring him to Christ,—fell a-preaching in that city, and converted many others to the saving knowledge of Christ. And he being a man learned also, as even Popish writers say of him, opened the Scriptures, and turned them into the vulgar French. And he and his followers, thinking it their duty to preach this gospel unto others, as did the apostles, they forthwith sent abroad some of their company a-preaching. Which when it came to the ears of the Pope, they were prohibited, as being laymen. But they, affirming it was better to obey God than men, and it being an article of their faith, *unicuique licere verbum Dei libere prædicare*,—that it was lawful for any man to preach the gospel,—they went on in the course they had begun, though they were persecuted for it. And look, as in the primitive times, when persecution arose after the death of Stephen, and that the church of Jerusalem was dispersed, it was an occasion of further spreading the gospel unto other nations: so Waldus, being himself excommunicated, came into Picardy, and so into the Low Countries, and there, by his preaching, made many disciples, and then went into Germany, and last of all into Bohemia; and his followers were dispersed into Savoy, Lombardy, and the countries on this side the Alps; and Arnoldus, his companion, went into Spain. Insomuch that Poplinerius the historian gives this testimony of them, that these Waldenses, maugre the power of all Christian princes, about the year 1100, did broach a doctrine little differing from what the Protestants now hold; and not only dispersed it through France, but over all the parts of Europe. Of these things you may read at large in the English *History of the Waldenses*, and in Bishop Ussher's book, *De Successione Ecclesiæ*. Thus you see they preached, as here; yea, it was their profession; and they

preached to all nations, and the doctrine they preached was only the gospel, and to call men from idolatry to worship God aright, (as you may read at large in those books mentioned,) as the angel is here said to do, ver. 7.

Ver. 8.—But in an age or two following, their number increasing in all kingdoms, and their light growing more clear, there follows out of this company a second angel, who with open mouth proclaims that Rome was Babylon, and the Pope that beast, and that Antichrist, in this Revelation described, and ordained to ruin. Which thing Waldus did at the first but begin to mutter; for in one more ancient breviary of the articles of their opinions, (as you have them in that forenamed book, *De Successione Ecclesiæ*, cap. vi., n. 16,) this is the first, concerning the church of Rome, in these modest words only, *Romanum Præsulem reliquis parem esse episcopis*,—that the Pope of Rome was but equal to all other bishops. But afterwards in the following ages, their followers grew more bold; and in another edition of their articles, in the same chapter, n. 17, you find this, *Romanam ecclesiam esse meretricem Babylonicam*,—that the church of Rome was the whore of Babylon. Which thing the professors in those next ages did inculcate, and insist on, and made it the eminent article of their profession and confession. But this was especially done by Wickliff and his followers, beginning about the year 1371, in England; and after him by John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, and their followers, anno 1400.

But then follows a third angel, more vehement than the rest,—and that was Luther and his followers,—and he proceeds further, and says, that not only Rome is Babylon, but that all those who cleave unto her doctrine and superstitions 'shall drink of the wrath of God for ever;' that is, be certainly damned, and go to hell. He shewing that her worship and doctrine, the image of the beast, was a damned doctrine, and laying open the falsehoods and errors of it so manifestly, that now under so clear a light of the gospel as this age held forth, it could never stand with salvation to live therein. And so he urged a separation from Rome under pain of damnation. The voice of this angel is from ver. 9 to ver. 12.

Then follows an intimation, once for all, of those martyrdoms and bloody persecutions of all those three angels and their followers, as the effect of this their preaching, and as a trial of the truth of their doctrine, and their own sincerity. So, ver. 12, 13, 'Here is the patience of the saints;' that is, here comes in matter for the trial of it. And for their encouragement, there is a comfortable acclamation subjoined, 'Blessed are those that die in the Lord.' Now how, upon the preaching of all those angels, persecutions were raised,—which from the times of the heathenish and Arian persecutions, for the space of eight hundred years past before, in the dark times of Popery, the church was free from,—and there followed the martyrdoms of the followers of Waldus, Wickliff, Huss, and Luther, and of those that embraced their doctrine, especially upon and after this third angel's preaching; this the *Book of Martyrs* will inform you.

In the second place comes the time of the Reformation, after Luther; the state of which is presented to us under a double vision: the one of a *harvest*, the other of a *vintage*, which useth to come after harvest.

The first betokens that glorious peace and sunshine of the gospel which followed after those persecutions in Germany, England, &c., for sixty years and upwards, and this from ver. 14 to ver. 17. By a *harvest*, in Scripture, is meant the conversion and gathering in of the elect by the preaching of the gospel. So in the Old Testament, Isaiah prophesying of the conversion of the Jews in Egypt and Assyria, chap. xxvii. 12, 13, he useth this expression,

that God would thresh or 'beat off,' all along from the river Euphrates unto Egypt, those his elect people, that, as corn, should grow upon the shores thereof; and that he would thresh so clean, that they should be gathered 'one by one;' not leaving one grain of election behind, nor one ear of corn standing unreaped. It is an allusion to a harvest, and having in of corn, and threshing it. Like unto which is that speech of Christ, when he sent out his disciples: 'Lo, the regions are white, and ripe for the harvest,' and 'the harvest is great.' Which he spake when there were multitudes of people ripe and ready to receive the gospel. And since the preaching of the gospel by the third angel, what multitudes of such hungry souls have there been in these kingdoms? And what a glorious time of summer and harvest have we had? And this preaching of the gospel, that hath reaped this corn, hath been authorised by the chief magistrates, and by kingly power, even whole kingdoms professing it. And therefore he who in this vision hath the sickle given him to reap is presented 'crowned with a golden crown;' which, according to the analogy with the other contents of this book, chap. xii. 5, is when Jesus Christ, the Son of man, is visibly set in the throne, ruling by Christian magistrates, they using their power for him; as when the emperors turned Christians, you find the like expression used, chap. x.

The other vision is of a *vintage*, from ver. 17 to the end; which, as a vintage comes after harvest, so this falls out in the end of this summer, and after the harvest of the Reformation, and so shuts up the story of it. Wherein God, after he hath had in his corn, falls upon the grapes, the wild grapes, and cuts them down; but with another manner of sickle than he had done his own corn. He had reaped them with a sickle of conversion, but these he cuts down with the 'sharp sickle'—twice so called—of vengeance; and therefore, it is said that they are 'cast into the wine-press of God's wrath.' And these grapes are those carnal Protestants and professors of religion, who, together with the elect, have enjoyed the heat of this fair long summer, and hung like to grapes in the sun, but retaining their sourness, have been ripened indeed, but only for wrath and vengeance. And lo, how this sharp sickle hath gone up and down in Germany for well-nigh these twenty years, being such a wine-press of fierce wrath, and such a treading down to an overflowing of blood and misery, as hath scarce been paralleled in any age! For it is the vengeance of the temple, not so much destroyed, as defiled and dishonoured by their mixture; which as much provokes God unto wrath as the persecution of his temple would have done. And therefore, the angel that is the executioner of it is provoked unto it by the cries of an angel that comes from the altar, as one who is zealous of God's worship, and disdains as much that the temple and altar (the ordinances of worship) should be pestered and defiled with such as call themselves the church, saying, 'We are the temple of God,' and so cause God's name to be blasphemed, as that the idolatrous Papists, whom this book calls the Gentiles, chap. xi. 1, should tread down this holy city and sanctuary. For even these are no better than Gentiles also, who 'say they are Jews, but are not.'

And that this vengeance should be meant of this execution of it upon the Protestant party seems evident unto me by this, that the wine-press is said to be 'trodden without the city;' that is, without the jurisdiction or reach of the power of the city of Rome,—for so that word city, according to the style of this book, doth still import, as chap. xi. 8, chap. xvi. 19, &c.,—and so is on purpose added to shew that it befalls even such kingdoms and places as had cast off the Pope's supremacy. And it appears also by this, that it is mentioned apart from the vials which follow, which are all the judgments

that fall upon the Popish and Turkish enemies of the church; but this upo a third sort of enemies within the church itself. And although it be true that so far as there hath befallen, through these German wars, a plague upo the Popish party in Germany, (as upon the emperor, and those Popish prince under him,) so far indeed as upon them, it is to be reduced to one of th vials, which do contain all the last plagues on the Popish party, and particu larly comes under the fourth vial; yet so far as these wars have brough miseries and desolation on the Protestant party, so far in that respect it i presented in this vintage. And therefore you may observe, that the angel who it is said hath 'power over fire,'—who is indeed the angel of the fourth vial, as the angel of the third is called the 'angel of the waters,'—becaus he hath 'power to scorch men with fire,' chap. xvi. 8, that angel it is tha incites and provokes this angel here, with the 'sharp sickle, to cut down an tread these grapes.' So that this vintage is a distinct execution from that o the fourth vial, and yet contemporaneous with it. In a word, these wars, s far as they hurt the Popish party, are the fourth vial; and so far as the hurt the Protestant party, they are the vintage here meant.

That *horses* are mentioned as treaders of this wine-press most fitly carrie it to these German wars; the German horses being the most approved wa horses in Europe, and these wars having been chiefly maintained and acte by them. And then also this allusion of grapes trodden in a wine-press wa as suitable to express the miseries befallen those countries; which are famou for vines and vintages, as the Palatinate and other places in Germany ar And for the like reason the judgments upon Edom and Bozrah are expresse by a vintage, Isa. lxiii. 1, because it was a country famous for vines. An then again, haply the space of 1600 furlongs here mentioned, which som make more miles, some less, may, for the length, be found as fitly to agre unto the chief seat of these wars and wine-press; which, take the length o the Protestant part of Germany trodden down, and here only intended, ma not every way extend much further. But the computation and measuring o this I leave unto others.

And whether or no God will bring this wine-press into any other of h vineyards, as England, Scotland, &c., and by bloody wars tread down th grapes there, as he hath done in Germany, keeping still to the same propo tion of 1600 furlongs, as our Brightman reckons the length of England t be, and fulfilling it over and over in other several Protestant kingdoms an dominions, He only knows who is the Lord both of this harvest and vin age. Only this may be more confidently affirmed, that the rest of thos carnal Protestants in England and other places, who, like the outward cour have been laid and joined to the people of God, shall yet, before the expir tion and ending of the beast's kingdom and number, be more or less give up to the Papists, and to the jurisdiction of the city of Rome, and be troc den down, and made to veil to them, if not all of them by bloody wars an conquests, yet by some base and unworthy yielding to them, as a just pur ishment of their carnal profession of the gospel. And this in England, w see, they begin to do; and this, I take it, chap. xi. 1 doth foretell and pr phesy of. Which chapter being intended to give a signal or forerunner o the beast's ruin, and the expiration of his 1260 years and period of his kin dom, which now is approaching, doth present the state of the church, an what shall befall it, not long before his ruin; and so withal that face of th church just before is presented there, chap. xi. 1. And the setting dow what should befall it, ver. 7–14, must necessarily belong to these times, an so is to be subjoined unto this 14th chapter, (though it comes in there as

common signal of the ending of both prophecies, and therefore between both,) to make the story of the church complete.

And this I shall handle and make to appear when I have first opened the meaning of the vials, especially of the four first of them: which though for order's sake are, by the Holy Ghost, put (as in this book things of a sort use to be) with the rest after this 14th chapter, yet they have been a-pouring forth upon the beast and his company from that first preaching of the gospel until now, as will further appear. And the reason why I would open these four first vials, ere I open the 11th chapter, is, because they synchronise with this 14th chapter; and because four vials are mentioned as poured out, chap. xi., ere the witnesses are slain, which cannot be understood till these be first explained.

CHAPTER II.

The exposition of the 15th chapter.

THE Holy Ghost having thus first of all shewn how the reformation from Popery was to be brought about and churches erected, he here beginneth to set before us the uniform state of believers in this temple, and the several degrees of their ruining the false church, by several vials; and this, as set together in one continued view throughout all these times, from the first separation from Popery until Christ's kingdom. Concerning which, in general, I shall premise three things.

First, The difference between their condition here and the condition of the churches under the dark times of Popery, as is uniformly described chap. xiv. 1–6. And observe this difference in these four particulars:—

1. Those, chap. xiv., were virgins, but not separate; but these here stand alone in a temple by themselves, washing themselves from the defilement of Popery, as being separated therefrom.

2. Those sung a new song confusedly; but these sing the song of Moses and the Lamb—that is, the law and the gospel—distinctly.

3. Those there stood naked upon the hill of Sion, as it was ere a temple was reared upon it; but these here are gathered into a temple, and roofed over their heads.

4. Those sung their song in Egypt; but these are come out of Egypt, and so sing Moses's song.

The *second* thing to be premised is, that these seven angels and their vials, and this company here, are in the general description of them, or in that preface to their description prefixed, ver. 1, called 'a sign, great and marvellous,' and 'another sign.'

1. It is called *a sign*. A sign is always a forerunner of something to come. Now, what it is that is here pointed at as to come, ver. 5 tells us; namely, that 'after these things,'—that is, after these vials,—'the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony was opened in heaven.' So then, these vials, they are the sign of that glorious holy of holies which John saw was to come after them; or they are the sign of the New Jerusalem,—for by that 'temple of the tabernacle of the testimony' is that state meant,—and also of Christ's coming; and so they are that 'sign of the Son of man' spoken of Matt. xxiv. And these plagues do here go before him, as in like manner the prophets use to describe his progress with plagues and pestilence before him. And therefore, if you observe it, just when the last vial approacheth, chap. xvi. 15, then warning is given, 'Behold, I come as a thief,' &c.

2. It is called *another sign*: for that sign, chap. xii., was the sign of the devil's being thrown down in heathenism; but this, of the devil's throwing down out of Popery, and Christ's coming to set up his kingdom. So that we of this age do indeed stand in the midst of the times of these vials, and

so may see how much of Christ's train is gone before, and what is to come hereafter, himself being to come in the rear of all.

The *third* thing to be premised and observed is, that they are called the 'last plagues.'

Christ had three sorts of enemies to subdue, by three several sorts of plagues:—

1. Satan and his false worship, together with the heathenish empire; which he despatched by the six seals, chap. vi.

2. The Roman empire; which he ruined by the six trumpets.

3. The Pope in the west, and the Turk in the east, who succeeded in the place of the Roman (both eastern and western) empire; and for these he hath prepared seven vials. And because these are the last enemies, therefore these vials are called the last plagues.

Thus much in general; now more particularly to descend to the several contents of this chapter.

There are two things which are more eminently presented to our view in this 15th chapter:—

First, The church or company of believers standing in the temple, described ver. 2–5, and ver. 8.

Secondly, The angels, who are executioners of the vials out of that temple, described ver. 6–8.

First, For the company from among whom the angels come:—

1. They have a temple over their heads, as ver. 8, 'continually filled with smoke;' as at the first dedication of Moses's tabernacle, Exod. xl. 34, 35; and at the dedication of Solomon's temple, which was a larger edition of that which Moses had given the pattern of, 1 Kings viii. 16. To shew that during the vials there should be new erections, and editions, and reformations of the temple; unto all which God still gives the testimony of his presence. As—

(1.) When that first separation from Popery was made, and true churches were set up by the Waldenses, and smoke filled their temples.

(2.) In the Reformation made by Luther and Calvin there was a further edition of the temple, and smoke did afresh fill it also.

(3.) In the 11th chapter, ver. 1, you will meet with another reformation, and casting away the outward court; and smoke will afresh fill those new-measured temples also: God still giving new testimonies of his presence, as new editions of purer churches do come forth.

2. Their station in this temple is upon a sea of glass; which, as you heard out of the 4th chapter, was an allusion to that brazen sea in which the priests washed themselves: to shew that this company of believers, from out of which the vials do come, should be such as should still more and more purify themselves afresh in their several ages from those defilements of doctrine and worship which Antichrist had brought into the church. And they, in their several successions, discovering new and further defilements, are therefore still presented as coming forth fresh and anew out of the sea of glass; and accordingly are presented standing upon the brim, as being new come out from washing themselves, and so growing purer and purer, until they become a bride fully prepared for their Lord and King.

3. They are also presented as victors and conquerors,—for such, through pouring forth these vials, they do become,—and in the end shall fully prevail over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name; which are several degrees of Popery and antichristianism, whereof some are more gross and some more refined. All which they in like

manner do by degrees, in their several successions, go on to discover and to overcome; until by that time that these vials are all poured out, they have got a full and perfect conquest over all. And therefore, in this general description, they are set forth as those that had such a full conquest; for that, take them first and last, they shall have a perfect and complete victory over all these. The meaning is not, as Mr Brightman understands it, that this company had first got a complete victory over all these before the vials began; but this is spoken of the whole company and succession of them first and last conjunctively, the intendment being to give a general description of them, and to set down what they should do and accomplish by that time their whole time is expired, and to shew how, by that time they shall have poured out their vials, they shall obtain the victory. Thus, in like manner of speech, it is said, ver. 1, that 'in them is filled up,' or fulfilled, 'the wrath of God;' *completa est ira Dei.* Which is spoken as if it were already accomplished and fulfilled; but the meaning is, that by that time they are all emptied, the wrath of God will be thoroughly exercised and fulfilled through them and by them. And so doth this here note out, not a full victory before the vials, but a complete victory in and through the pouring out of these vials; and that this company, ere the time of the vials is fully expired, obtains it. For the vials are themselves the means by which they do overcome; and for each degree of which victory they sing a triumphant song.

4. These 'sing the song of Moses:' for the former of the vials are allusions to the plagues of Egypt; and by that time that the fifth vial comes they will have drowned the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and so will sing that song, Exod. xv. And after that they will sing the song of the Lamb, even his marriage-song, as in the 19th chapter, (which comes in after the funeral-song of the city of Rome, or the fifth vial in chap. xviii.,) ver. 6, 7, 'Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come;' that is, is approaching. Or this song may refer to the doctrine of the gospel, which now began to be taught among them more clearly; for Moses's song, Deut. xxxii., was doctrinal; and so in the Old Testament it was ordinary to utter matters of doctrine in songs. And thus in this book the doctrine of the church is still expressed, and is called a song. And so whereas, during the dark times of Popery, they sung as it were a new song, differing from Popish doctrine, yet so confusedly that none could learn it, as chap. xiv. 3: now they have the everlasting gospel to preach, as chap. xiv. 6, and they sing Moses's song and the Lamb's distinctly; they preach the law and the gospel clearly and rightly, and make manifest his δικαιώματα, which we translate *judgments*, but signifies his *justifications* (as Rom. viii. 4) of poor sinners made manifest, as ver. 4. The doctrine of justification by Christ being eminently revealed and made known in the time of these vials, and the works of redemption most clearly manifested.

And, moreover, these do also set up Christ, both in himself and in his relations to his church; as calling him—

1. The Lord Almighty; 2. King of Saints; 3. The only Holy One. And so—

1. As the only ruler and lord of his church; 2. And king that must give laws unto it; 3. As the fountain of all grace and holiness: in a word, as a God only to be believed in and worshipped, as being only and alone holy. They magnify nor saints, nor temples, nor the Pope; no, nor any creature whatsoever. For so, Jer. x. 7, the like speech is uttered in opposition to all false gods; and therefore, say they, 'Who will not fear thee?' or worship thee, and that according to thine own ways prescribed in thy word, and not

according to men's inventions. 'Just, and true, and righteous are thy ways,' that is part of their song, and all superstitions and human inventions in worship are false. So says David, 'I hate every evil way, but thy law do I love,' as being only true and righteous, Ps. cxix.—Thus much for their song.

Secondly, The description of these angels, and their preparations to pour out their vials, you have from ver. 6 of this 15th chapter to the end, as you have the execution and pouring out of their vials in the 16th chapter.

The angels are described as 'clothed in white,' as priests, and 'girt with a golden girdle' of alacrity, strength, sincerity, and truth; for in Scripture men are said to be girt with all these. And 'one of the four beasts'—that is, of the officers of the churches, whose mouths in praying the officers still are—is said to 'give these vials unto these angels,' in that theirs and the church's prayers do fill up these vials in their several successions. And the plagues they execute are said to be in vials, both because the prayers of the saints do fill up the wrath poured out,—for, chap. v., the vials are interpreted the prayers of the saints,—and also in allusion to the expression in the Old Testament, where God's wrath is described by a cup or vial in the hand of the Lord; as often in the Psalms you have it. And Rome's sin being expressed by 'a cup of abomination in her hands,' her plagues are therefore fitly expressed by vials and cups of wrath, irresistibly poured out upon their heads from heaven. And they are said to be 'filled with the wrath of God, that liveth for ever and ever,' for that these plagues are spiritual as well as corporal, as I shall shew, and are but the beginnings of an everlasting wrath, as that fire from heaven upon the Sodomites is said to be 'an everlasting fire,' and so called by Jude.

Again, these vials are said to come 'out of the temple;' that is, out of the church or churches then erected. Which because it follows the mention of the 'opening the temple of the tabernacle in heaven,' therefore some have mistaken it, as if these angels had come out of the 'temple of the testimony,' mentioned ver. 5: whereas that temple there is, by way of distinction, called the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony, even the holy of holies; and the opening of that temple, not spoken in relation unto the angels coming out, as opening upon their coming forth, but for the discovery of the ark, as you have it interpreted under the seventh trumpet, chap. xi. 19, in allusion to the holy of holies, which was kept veiled. Now, by that 11th chapter, it evidently appears that the vials are poured out before the opening of this tabernacle of the testimony in heaven. For, ver. 5, 6, you read of four vials before the killing of the witnesses; and the fifth vial is after their rising; and the passing away of the second woe is the sixth vial; and then the seventh vial and the seventh trumpet are all one, as hath been oftentimes shewed; and then comes the tabernacle of the testimony, or holy of holies, to be opened, and the ark to be discovered and seen in it, ver. 19 of that chapter. And in like manner here also, the opening of this tabernacle is said to be *μετὰ ταῦτα*, after these things,—that is, after these vials,—which is a phrase in this book always noting out things in a several succession performed, and a differing vision, as chap. iv. 1, and chap. vii. 9; and the mention of it comes in here only to shew the event of these vials. The temple therefore that these angels come out of is at the purest but the temple of priests; and yet 'filled with smoke from the glory and power of God,' it betokening his special, glorious, and powerful presence in and with the church during the time of the vials, which the smoke that filled the temple at the dedication was a sign of. And this smoke here implies, and is the sign of, three things:—

1. Of God's *presence* in these churches; so, Isa. iv. 5, under the allusion to the smoke in the temple, God's presence in his assemblies under the New Testament is there spoken of. And here it is interpreted the glory of the Lord: for so it follows, 'the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of the Lord;' that is, his glorious presence, which, Isa. vi. 1, is said to fill the temple.

2. Of God's *defence* and protection of his church; and therefore it is here also added, 'and from the power of the Lord.' So that none can enter in to hurt them within the temple. And thus also, Isa. iv. 5, the smoke is interpreted 'a defence;' and, ver. 6, there is said to be 'a covert and a refuge from the storm,' &c.

3. Of *offence* also to their enemies. So in the 18th Psalm, smoke is made a sign of God's anger and wrath; 'a smoke ascended in his anger.' And so, whereas it is said, that 'no man was able to enter into the temple,' one probable meaning of that expression, to me, is, that whereas God poured forth upon the enemies of his church vials of wrath, and these plagues were rained abroad upon them,—against which this temple, as was said, was the only refuge and covert, men still using to fly unto the temple, and to the horns of the altar, as being their sanctuary,—God in his just judgment hardeneth, and so keepeth those his enemies of the Popish party from joining themselves to this his temple; so that they, through the obduateness of their hearts, of which you may still read in the vials, are not able to enter into it, and so perish, and are destroyed by these plagues. And whereas it is said, 'they entered not in till the seven plagues were fulfilled,' the meaning is, that they never entered; as, Gen. viii. 7, and Psalm cxii. 8, and Acts iii. 21,* *until* is put for *never*.

* Perhaps more apposite passages than any of these would be Psalm cx. 1, and Matt. i. 25.—ED.

CHAPTER III.

The exposition of the 16th chapter.—A division of the vials.—The two last briefly touched.

THE execution of these two last vials doth follow the five first, from ver. 1 to ver. 12; and they are vials upon the beast, the Pope, and his adherents; God by degrees plaguing them as he did the Egyptians, until the fifth falling eminently upon the seat of the beast, Rome itself, his kingdom be so darkened and despoiled of its glory and power, that although the beast may remain, for Jesus Christ himself, at his coming under the seventh vial, to have the last blow at him, and the full glory of the conquest, yet so weakened and darkened as that I believe the period of his power *to do* (as the word is in the original, chap. xiii. 5) for forty-two months, or 1260 years, is there set, and the date of his lease expired.

Now for the sixth and seventh vials: because they are further off to come, and that the seventh vial, and the preparation unto it, from ver. 13, belongs to the kingdom of Christ, as being the immediate making way thereunto, therefore I will but briefly touch upon these, and despatch them first. The five first, especially the fourth and fifth, being those that concern these times, and which chiefly serve for the opening the 11th chapter, I shall treat more largely upon.

Now the sixth vial is upon the great river Euphrates; that is, the Turk, whom the sixth trumpet left standing in the east. And he is compared to the great river, (which is the epithet given to the river Euphrates in the Old Testament,) as the Assyrian monarch and his army are called in Isa. viii. 7; and to the river Euphrates, for his first seat was, as you heard out of chap. ix. 14, upon that river. Now this river is to be dried up for the kings of the east, the Jews, to possess their own land, according to that prophecy of their last conversion, Isa. xi. 13, 14, compared with the 15th and 16th verses of the same chapter.

The seventh vial is general, upon the air, the whole power of Satan all the world over. The relics both of Turk and Pope, and of all the church's enemies throughout the world, as ver. 14, mustering up all their forces against the Christians in the west, and the Jews in the east, are to be overthrown by Jesus Christ himself and his armies; as you may read more at large in the 19th chapter, from the 11th verse to the end, that being an explication of this vial, the last upon the world, as the 18th chapter is of the fifth vial, the most eminent upon the beast.

SECTION I.

Seven things premised for the understanding the five first vials, which are upon the beast and his company.

Now for these five first vials upon the beast, Antichrist, and his adherents; I shall premise these things for the true understanding of them:—

First, That for the times of them, they, as was said, began with the times of the first separation from Rome, recorded chap. xiv. 6, and so do indeed contain all those steps and degrees of ruining Antichrist, first and last, from the first time of the church's attempting to come forth out, and separating from this Egypt. And therefore the three first vials are an allusion, as you shall see in the next premise, unto those plagues which Moses and Aaron, in bringing Israel out of Egypt, executed upon the Egyptians; and so do refer to the times of the church's separation and first reformation. It appears also from the thing itself; for how can we think that all those discoveries of the whore's nakedness, and the falling off of these kingdoms from her—although they for a time should begin to court her again—should not be reckoned among the vials, they having been well-nigh as great plagues as are like yet to befall her, except that her last ruin?

And it appears likewise from this, that in the vintage of the 14th chapter, we find, as was observed, mention made of the angel of the fourth vial. Therefore the times afore that vintage must belong unto those three vials which preceded this fourth. And for the time of the beginning of them, whether at the harvest, or the voices of those angels that made the separation, the Holy Ghost hath not left us without some character whereby we may discern it, in the story of that 15th chapter, where the song which the church sings, when the vials do begin, is, as you may see it there, 'Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest,' &c. Of which this is one meaning,—though there is another,—that the plagues of these vials now beginning, the judgments of God are made manifest. Now see what the voice of the first angel is, he who began the first separation from Antichrist, and first preached the gospel to every nation, chap xiv. 6, 7. His message unto all nations is, 'Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgments is come: and worship him who hath made heaven and earth.' That angel did but begin to give warning to Antichrist and his company of the vials that approached. But then observe the voice of the second angel, and you will find that the first vial did begin as the effect of these two angels' preaching. For this second not only calls Rome Babylon, and discovers the Pope to be Antichrist, but says, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen;' that is, the foundation of her ruin is laid. Now here began the first vial, even in this discovery of him to be Antichrist, whom before that the superstitious world did never so much as suspect.

And whereas it is said, 'Babylon is fallen,' the Scripture speaks of a thing as done when the foundation of it is laid. So the western empire is reckoned as taken away then when the wars of the Goths began, and when the first of the ten kingdoms was broken off from the empire, anno 410; as was before said in the exposition of the 13th chapter. And the Pope is from that time reckoned to rise with his ten horns, though it was forty years after ere all the ten kingdoms were fully erected; yea, and seventy years after ere the power of the western empire was wholly extinct. Thus in the like manner, Isa. xxi., the prophet says of old Babylon, 'She is fallen,' he prophesying at the very time when the Medes first revolted from that monarchy, and began to set up a kingdom of their own, which afterward was to destroy Babylon, being also enabled thereto by that revolt. Now so is it here: when the first open and professed revolt from Rome, as from a second Babylon, was made by our predecessors, then was the foundation of her fall laid; then, says the angel, 'Babylon is fallen;' and so there begins the first vial, for the vials are the means of ruining of it.

A *second* thing to be premised is, That these vials are expressed in an allusion unto the plagues executed in Egypt by Moses and Aaron; of which the first were not so great, but they ended in the drowning of those Egyptians in the Red Sea, even as these do in the utter ruining of the seat of Antichrist.

The first is upon the earth, and the effect of it a noisome and grievous sore on the men who have the mark of the beast; in allusion to that plague of throwing dust in the air by Moses, which caused a botch on man and beast then in Egypt.

The second on the sea, and the waters thereof.

The third on the rivers and fountains, turning all their waters into blood. All this is a manifest allusion unto that turning the Egyptian rivers, &c., into blood by Moses.

The fourth is upon the sun, and tormenteth men with fire. Which may be an allusion to the punishment of Sodom. For so in the 11th chapter, where these four first vials are enumerated, ver. 5, 6, the antichristian state is called Egypt or Sodom. Or rather it alludes to Moses's consuming by fire that company that offered up strange fire in the wilderness, when they were come out of Egypt.

A *third* thing to be premised is, That as in the trumpets the Holy Ghost compared the empire to a world, so here in the vials he useth the same comparison, comparing the kingdom of the beast, and the several parts of it to be plagued, unto several parts of the world. And as the four first trumpets were so many degrees of ruining the western empire, so are these vials of ruining the beast's world or empire. The first trumpet was on the earth, the second on the sea, the third on the rivers, and the fourth on the sun. And whereas it was there shewed, that in Scripture any kingdom or body is usually compared to a world, which hath an earth and heavens, &c., wherein what is lowest is the earth, and what is highest is the heavens, the sun and stars, &c.; so in that empire then, and now in this antichristian kingdom here, the parts of it are compared to an earth, sun, sea, rivers, &c.

Fourth premise. And as I observed in the 13th chapter, that the Pope and his company were resembled by a double beast, one representing the political state of these ten kingdoms, which made up one body under him as a head; and the other the spiritual state of his church and clergy, as they call it, which make up a distinct body under him as their high priest and spiritual head: so, answerably, this his earth, and rivers, and sun, which are the parts of these his kingdoms, may, according to the analogy of this representation, be interpreted in a double sense; either his spiritual earth, sea, &c., or his political earth, sea, &c.

Fifth premise. Seeing that in the 11th chapter, ver. 8, his kingdom is called spiritual Egypt and Sodom, and this in relation to these very plagues of the vials, which are enumerated there, ver. 5, 6: 'The city,' says he, 'which is spiritually called Egypt and Sodom;' and that is more than merely or allegorically such, it importing that this his kingdom is a spiritual Egypt and a spiritual Sodom;—and it is a state, we know, that claimeth spiritual jurisdiction in spiritual things, and over the souls of men, as chap. xviii. 13 hath it, and not only or principally in things outward and political, but *in ordine ad spiritualia*, in order to things spiritual: now therefore the plagues (and so these vials, they being the plagues upon this Egypt and Sodom) upon this city, must needs be understood of spiritual plagues, upon the souls and spirits of Antichrist's adherents, as well as outward. For they must be answerable to the Egypt upon which they are plagues; yea, and

seeing that it is both a spiritual state, and yet withal a temporal kingdom also for outward power and pomp, having an earth, sea, &c., as other worldly kingdoms have; therefore they shall have double plagues, spiritual and outward also, on their spirits and also on their outward worldly kingdom. Even thus it became the righteous God, as in relation to these plagues he is called, chap. xvi. 5, to proportion their plagues to their sins, and so to 'double unto her double according to her works,' as the phrase is, chap. xviii. 6. For him to ruin this beast and his adherents but outwardly only, as he hath done other monarchies, was not enough; for he sinned, not only in assuming outward power, pomp, and glory, and a kingdom like to other monarchies, under the name and pretence of having Christ's power, but a spiritual kingdom also. The merchandise of this city was not only gold and precious stones, &c., chap. xviii. 12, but likewise the souls of men too, as it is there. She traded in spirituals as well as temporals; and therefore the highest spiritual judgments, as well as temporal, shall befall that state, and the abettors of it. And as the plagues of Pharaoh and his Egyptians were spiritual, in the hardening of their hearts, as well as temporal; so such a spiritual hardness and impenitency is made mention of in some of these vials, as well as outward plagues. And therefore they are also said, chap. xv. 7, to be 'the wrath of God that liveth for ever,' an eternal wrath seizing upon the souls of them on whom they are poured. And such are these four first vials, and so to be understood both of spiritual and temporal plagues.

I mention the four first especially, because there where this city is called spiritually Egypt, these four are enumerated; namely, chap. xi. 5, 6. And as it is evident that these vials are in that 11th chapter to be understood spiritually, so it is as evident that the same vials, as here in chap. xvi. they are made mention of, are to be understood of outward plagues, and so meant of both.

Sixthly, For the right understanding these vials, I premise, That though there be a first, second, and third vial in order succeeding each other, and which in a successive order begin after each other, and have some special precise time for their eminent pouring out and execution; yet so as some sprinklings of the first may continue still under the second, third, and fourth, and some relics of the second under the third, fourth, &c., and so of the rest. And this seems evident to me, in that their *sores* begun under the first vial are made mention of under the fifth vial, ver. 11 of that chapter. And so in like manner the same effect, namely, blaspheming, which is a part of the fourth vial, and an effect of it, is also continued in a further height under the fifth. And so again, on the contrary, it may fall out that some droppings of a succeeding vial may begin in the times of the vial foregoing it, and go before, as the droppings of storms do, before their strength and fulness comes; and so may these, before the extremity of pouring forth the vial itself. As for example, during the times of the fourth vial some droppings of the fifth may begin, and some preparations to it, though still the fulness of that and every other vial hath a special time in its due order succeeding.

The *seventh* and last thing to be premised is, That all the plagues on the Popish party, first and last, are reducible to one of these vials. For, chap. xv. 1, they are said to be 'the last plagues, in which the wrath of God is fulfilled' upon that party; and so every drop and sprinkling of wrath and vexation poured out goes to fill up some vial or other, as a part of it.

Section II.

:ular and more large explication of the five first vials on the beast and his company.

r a more particular explication of them :—
:t vial is principally upon the beast's *earth*, the lowest part of his
and this, according to that rule given, both spiritual and political.
vial was the effect of those first and second angels' preachings,
, especially of that second angel there. For the preaching of the
d the discovery of the Pope to be that Antichrist, did draw away
his inferior subjects, and of the common people in all kingdoms,
ıe ten European kingdoms, which are his earth political. And so
ity and interest in the hearts of the people all Europe through was
and the number of the worshippers of the beast lessened. So as
›rld did not now, without contradiction, go after him as they had
ıd there was an effect of this vial also upon his spiritual earth;
clergy were. For the Waldenses and their followers, by their
in those ages, discovering the uncleanness, idleness, and hypocrisy
ests, monks, and nuns, who were the beast's enchanters, they did,
, cast up dust in their faces, as Moses did; and so they brake out
, and became odious to all the people. So speaks the vial, ver. 2,
l a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark or
' Now they are properly his clergy, who, being exempted from
power, are more peculiarly his subjects and sworn vassals; and,
r ordination do receive from him a character indelible—(for this,
position upon chap. xiii.)—who are also called the worshippers of
they being the upholders of his idolatrous doctrine. And, accord-
find in story that all those first gospellers before Luther made it
st subject and end of their writings and disputes, to render odious
ıe pharisaical Popish clergy, as in the *Book of Martyrs* abundantly

was this judgment merely outward, as only bringing shame through
ıtward discovery of their hateful and abominable iniquities, which
the beginning of their ruin, for it made way for it in all men's
ıt further, it is most certain, that the effect of the light of the
ıich in their preaching was discovered, proved really a curse unto
ıh clergy, in order to this their breaking forth in filthiness and
n that for this their not embracing it, but shutting their eyes
God gave them up, by way of a curse, unto all manner of gross
cleanness, sodomy, &c., so as after this to commit them with more
than before this preaching of the gospel; even as he did the
Rom. i.: because 'they withheld the truth in unrighteousness,
he gave them up *the more* unto vile affections.' So these, after
ght of the gospel began to dawn, they daily brake out into botches
nore than ever they did before. And thus this vial was a spiritual
upon them, as well as an outward, in discovering their sores unto
e. And this is the first degree of their spiritual judgment under
al.
ond vial is upon the *sea*. And this is the fruit and effect of the
's preaching, namely, Luther and his followers; who as in their
ey were raised up to a greater light, comparatively to the former,
t of their doctrine was a further plague, both upon the political

and spiritual sea of the beast. The sea, in a kingdom or body politic, is put for jurisdiction over many people, as was shewed in the second trumpet, chap. viii.; and so here the sea of the beast are those many kingdoms, and peoples, and nations, and tongues, which she sits upon, as you may see it expounded, chap. xvii. 15. Now after Luther's preaching, and his followers', not only particular persons, as before, were divided from the Pope, but whole nations were rent from him, as England, Germany, Sweden, Scotland, &c., and his sea lessened by a third part and more; and some of the ten horns of the beast wrung off, so becoming like as members when divided from the body, and, as the similitude is, ver. 3, to express that division, as 'the blood of a dead man.' And every living thing died in those seas divided from him; in that now those of the Popish faction could not, through the alteration of religion by law, live in their idolatrous worship, so quietly, safely, and peaceably as before. There was no free living or breathing for them in these separated kingdoms.

And in like manner his spiritual sea also had a vial poured upon it, even his abominable doctrine and worship; as the doctrine of purgatory, indulgences, merit, &c., in which, as in the sea, his merchants—namely, his priests—had brought in gain, both to themselves and to the Pope's custom-house, as the expression is, chap. xviii. 17.

This sea of the beast's doctrine is turned into blood, and does, like the blood of a dead man, begin to putrefy and stink; yea, and, which is a further plague, to be damnable. Insomuch that those who, after so clear a light of the gospel now discovered, will still continue in that doctrine, die and perish eternally. And so in that sense also it is true which is said, ver. 3, that 'every living thing died in the sea.' And see how this agrees with the preaching of the third angel, chap. xiv. 9, 10; he preaching, that not only that Rome was Babylon, as the former was, but that 'if any one did worship the beast or his image, the same should drink of the wine of God's wrath.' And by that wrath is meant hell: for it follows, 'the smoke of their torments ascends up for ever and ever;' that is, now they shall be sure to be all damned who know the truth but embrace it not. And this was a further spiritual punishment upon them, above what their doctrine was unto them in former times, wherein through ignorance men remaining, many more of them were saved than now there are.

The third vial is upon the *rivers and fountains;* that is, those who serve to enlarge or any way recover that his sea again, or to sweeten it. They are therefore called rivers, because as rivers run from the sea into the sea again, so do these.

I shall now explicate both the rivers and fountains severally.

First, For his *fountains:* they are the lesser springs; and those—

1. The spiritual ones. When the Egyptian waters were turned into blood, we read that they digged fountains and wells; and that they also were turned into blood by Moses. So here, they, when their sea is become bloody, dig fountains to live in. Which fountains are their writings and writers since the Reformation, that with learning and eloquence would labour to sweeten and make good some of their sea-waters again; but in vain, our writers again confuting them, and turning all into blood, as it was before. So as still those among them that shall read the one and the other, cannot but so be convinced, that if they persist still in their doctrine they will be damned, as the curse is, 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12.

2. Their fountains temporal and political also. Such we may account those politic agents, the Jesuits, and others that have, in all these separated king-

doms, attempted to restore this his lost power and jurisdiction. And the lesser springs, namely, particular persons, have many of them been turned to blood, whilst laws enacted against them (in England, 1581; in Holland, 1586; in France, 1584; and again in England 1605) cut off many of them, and gave them blood to drink, many of them being martyred; insomuch that they have a martyrology, or book of martyrs, even as we have. Thus they have had a just reward, as the angel from the altar cries, ver. 7; that is, true worshippers in churches, who through their prayers had procured these edicts, and therefore do now return the praise unto God's justice, in retaliating to them and upon them. That phrase, 'from the altar,' notes not out martyrdom, as some think, neither here nor chap. xiv. 18,—but this phrase, 'the souls under the altar,' is that which importeth martyrdom, as chap. vi.—but *altar* is here put to signify worship; and so, the angel out from the altar, or place of worship, is put to signify those public worshippers and priests of God that stand at the altar, or in public assemblies, and give thanks for these judgments upon all occasions. Their acclamation is, that as they had dealt by us, so now themselves were dealt with; and, indeed, just in the same manner: for they had singled out particular persons, and put them to death by bloody laws established; and these kingdoms, being fallen off, have enacted the like, and put them to death in the like public manner.*

In the second place, this third vial is upon his *rivers* also, and greater streams, namely, those armadoes and navies from out the sea of those kingdoms that continue still to uphold the beast, and endeavour to lay all kingdoms into this one sea again. As the Spaniards, both against England in '88, and against Holland often since, sent out to regain Rome's jurisdiction; who yet have still been defeated. And unto this head may be reduced the defeatment of that late navy, 1639, sent forth to the same end, as a sprinkling of this vial—though now be the times of the fourth vial—still going on, according to the rule given in the *sixth* premise.

The fourth vial is upon the *sun;* and to the angel that is executor of it, there is 'power given to scorch men with fire.' The effect whereof is their blasphemy. This vial seemeth to me to have two distinct parts:—1. The effusion of this vial upon the sun. 2. The scorching with fire those that adhere to the beast. And according to my former general rules, I do interpret it both of outward and of spiritual plagues, and both of them falling on the Popish party; and so the former part of the vial to import an outward plague, and the latter a spiritual punishment. Now—

1. For the vial upon the sun. The sun here, according to the *third* premise or rule given, may be put for the more illustrious light or prince adhering to the Popish party, and shining in his political heaven, whereof he is the great god or Jupiter. And this must be either the emperor, or the king of Spain, or, as it may be, both; they both being of the same family of Austria.

The issue of these German wars, when the Popish party shall once have had blood enough given them to drink, shall be either the ruin of the one or the other, or both; and if not of them both, then of the Austrian family in Germany, as Mr Mede first well conjectured; though it may be the hint of his conjecture might have been taken from what was Mr Parker's opinion of this vial long before; who interpreted this sun to be some Protestant prince in Germany, who should first have a part of this vial poured upon him by

* It can scarcely be necessary to point out that the author's manifest approbation of persecution and persecuting ordinances, is a blot that, originally derived from Rome, long attached to the Reformed churches.—ED.

the Popish party; but being thereby provoked, and afterwards raised again, should, like the sun, scorch them with his heat, and so only the latter part of this vial should fall on them. Thus Mr Parker, anno 1616, did first interpret this vial, long before these German wars. But I do much rather incline to Mr Mede's opinion, because these vials are wholly peculiar to the beast and his company, and to those professed enemies of the church who adhere unto him. And so this first part of the vial upon the sun cannot be understood of any Protestant, but of those that do adhere to the beast, even as well as the latter part of it, 'scorching them with fire.'

Now if this sun be one of these two, either the king of Spain or the emperor, I rather take the latter: for the king of Spain, though now the greater light in the present horoscope, and so would, rather of the two, seem to be this sun; yet considering those more elderly and former times, the empire of Germany hath, for this 800 years, been the eminentest principality in Europe, and hath upheld the Pope the most, and in those times done more that way than any other king, though indeed some of the emperors opposed the Pope. Now God, in bringing punishments on kings and kingdoms, reckoneth with them for what their predecessors in state have done, and respecteth former times as much if not more than present. And besides, this German empire was peculiarly of the Pope's creation, being by him set up in the first foundation of it in Charlemain; even as God is said to set up 'the sun in his firmament, the work of his hands,' Psalm xix. So the Pope may be said to have set up this sun in his. And so the ruin of the emperor is more peculiarly a punishment, respecting the papal seat and authority, than the ruin of any other prince, he having so peculiar an interest in him, as in his eldest son and chief begotten.

This vial Mr Mede thought to have been in execution in that great prevailing of the king of Sweden against the emperor, whose death diverted many men's thoughts from that interpretation. But surely, though he proceeded not to throw down that sun from his heaven, yet those glorious victories of his, and quelling of the Popish party, may well be accounted in itself a vial, although it should proceed no further, and such a darkening of this sun as he will never more recover his ancient glory and splendour. And that king did lay such a foundation of weakening his power as may end in the utter ruin of that family in the issue of these wars. Others have interpreted this vial to be upon the Pope's own temporal and spiritual authority, which is his sun or chief glory; for so *sun* in the Old Testament, and the darkening of it, is put for glory, and the obscuring of it; as Isa. lx. 20, Jer. xv. 9. And so that power and authority which the Pope once had in temporals is here to be understood; he so eminently and conspicuously shining over princes in their temporal power, that, as their own decretals speak, they used to call the Pope and the emperor the two great luminaries in heaven, the sun and the moon, entitling the Pope the sun and the emperor the moon. But how hath this his glory, in the consciences of his own vassals, and in the eyes of those princes who sometimes were subject to him, waned more and more; which now at last may haply grow yet more dim? The whole kingdom of France ever denied him that absolute temporal power he once challenged. And in these latter times, how is the king of Spain rather become the sun, and the Pope the moon, who is glad to beg light from him, and to flatter other princes, to be by them upheld, who once flattered him, and whom he excommunicated at his pleasure? So that the Pope indeed is but the chaplain to the king of Spain, whom he makes use

of for the acquiring of a universal monarchy. But which of these, or whether both of these, are here meant, the event must judge. And thus much for the first part of this vial. Now—

2. For that other part which follows, 'and power was given him to scorch men with fire.' This hath been much mistaken; as if because the sun useth to scorch with heat, therefore that power were here given to this sun to scorch with fire, and so it should refer to the sun's heat. Whereas, I take it, it is mentioned as a distinct power given to this fourth angel; that as he hath power to pour out a vial on the Pope's sun, be it taken as political or otherwise, so also that he hath a further power given him to scorch all those with fire that shall continue to advance the Pope in these his declining times. Which, as I take it, doth, according to the rule given, properly refer to a further and greater height of spiritual punishments—and so this latter part makes up the spiritual plague, as the former did the political and outward plague—inflicted upon the upholders of the beast in the times of this vial; even upon the learned among them, especially those who now take pains to write for him, or to bring in his authority into these European kingdoms again, where the light of the gospel shines so clearly and perspicuously as they cannot but long since have been convinced of it; their *sea* being turned into blood, and discovered to be corrupt, and their writings (their *springs*) so clearly refuted and turned to blood also, that those that live in those kingdoms, and still labour to bring in Popery again, cannot but manifestly go against their own light and knowledge.

Now, to punish this so presumptuous and high rebellion against so much light still shining, and age after age increasing, the angel (or the executioners of this vial) hath power to 'scorch them with fire.' And this is manifestly interpreted, chap. xi., where the Holy Ghost, speaking of this vial, says, ver. 5, 'I will give power to my two witnesses,'—who are all one with these angels,—'and if any man will hurt them, fire shall proceed out of their mouths, and devour their enemies; and if any will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.' The punishment there recited is spiritual, as all the rest there mentioned are; for they do execute it as witnesses by prophesying, and therefore this fire is said to come out of their mouths. And those other plagues, (as their stopping the rain, &c., ver. 6,) must needs be so understood, namely, in a spiritual allusion. And so this of devouring with fire notes out the highest kind of punishment that men are capable of, as being killed with a witness; 'in this manner must they be killed.' And it is also there made the punishment of a wilful sinning of men, even of those that set their wills against God, and these his witnesses. For so the emphasis is put, 'if any man *will* hurt them;' and it is twice said, as making them go wholly and fully against knowledge, and so to sin wilfully.

Now both this here and that in chap. xi. do seem to be an allusion either to the fire of Sodom, the city being called spiritually Sodom, which, Jude 7, is called 'the vengeance of the eternal fire,' because that fire that came down from heaven upon the Sodomites was but a beginning of hell unto them, and a type of it unto us; or else, to which I rather incline, it is an allusion unto that fire that came out of Moses's mouth, namely, at his prayer, unto Nadab and Abihu, for offering strange fire unto God, Lev. x. 1, 2, and upon Korah's company, Num. xvi., when they said, 'All the people are holy.' Which, Heb. x. 27, 28, is brought in as the type to express their punishment who sin wilfully after the knowledge of the truth, and so sin against the Holy Ghost: ver. 26, 'If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of

the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment,' (ἐκδοχὴ κρίσεως,) or receiving judgment in their own consciences, which he there calls 'fiery indignation, that shall devour the adversaries,' ὑπεναντίους, underhand adversaries, (so the word is,) as that company was unto Moses, pretending to be for God and his people. 'All the people are holy,' say they, and so themselves were. And that unto this 'fiery indignation' that fell on that company, the Apostle's allusion there was,—who in that epistle openeth many types,—as making it a type of the torment and punishment of such kind of wilful sinners under the New Testament, is evident by what follows in the next verse, 'He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; then of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy,' &c. Now, bring but Paul's exposition of that type there unto this allusion that is used both in chap. xi. and also here, and it helps fully to expound this part of this vial, as I shall shew when I come to open the 11th chapter, ver. 5, unto which I must refer you for the full exposition of it.

As Paul there calls this sin a sinning wilfully, so, chap. xi., their sin is expressed twice by the malice of the will. And that it is this sin, or at least a high kind of presumptuous sinning against knowledge, accompanied with terror, that is here meant in this vial, chap. xvi. 8, 9, appears further also by the effect here mentioned,—namely, their 'blaspheming the name of God, who hath power over these plagues.' Now, blaspheming the Holy Ghost, or the workings of him in others, knowing they are his works,—as here these do blaspheme God, knowing they are his plagues,—this is the very spirit of this sin. And then final impenitency is here also added as the effect of it; that they 'repented not.' So that it is presumptuous sinning at least that is here meant.

And you may further observe, that this plague goes on in the fifth vial; and this sin against knowledge grows up to a further height under that vial, for there they are so 'scorched that they gnaw their tongues,' as men in hell. And that in these times (the times of the fourth vial) this sin against the Holy Ghost grows very rife and common, by reason of the abundance of light and conviction that shineth in churches, hath long been the observation of godly men who have had senses exercised to discern the spirits of men growing in rage and madness, beyond the supposal of any other principle that should act them in their warped and eccentric motion and violent proceedings. And surely, how that many of the learned among the Jesuits themselves should come to commit this sin is not hard to conceive; for, in their younger years, they are bred up in ways of devotion, and have truth and light enough among them to give them a 'taste of the powers of the world to come,' who yet, after their studying our writings and discerning the truth, do, for worldly ends, wilfully go against it; and being once engaged in those ends they fall to despise the truth, and are given up unto a wilful sinning of this great sin, through a just hand of God upon them, they being ordained to grow worse and worse as their light increaseth, even as it became God under these vials to punish them.

And so, as that first small and weaker light under the first vial being rejected, their punishment was a giving of them up unto gross sins; and then, further, under the second and third vials, their doctrine having been, by a clearer discovery, made to the persisters in it damnable; nothing was now left, they yet persisting, and God being engaged to rise higher in his plagues, but that God should strike hell-fire into their consciences, and seal up reprobation unto them. And thus it became him not to leave these opposers and

murderers of the saints and holy witnesses of God in all ages till he had given many of them up to this sin, of all other the highest, so to make full the measure of their iniquities, before that kingdom and state be finally ruined; as he did the Pharisees in that last age, when he meant to bring on them all their forefathers' killing his prophets in Jerusalem, giving them up unto this sin, as the effect of Christ's ministry, as this here of the witnesses' testimony.

But, above all, how those that apostatise and become of the Popish party, having lived and been brought up in 'a land of uprightness,' as it is Isa. xxvi., and yet 'will not behold the majesty of the Lord' shining round about them, but relinquish the truth they are educated in, and would bring in the worship and doctrine of the beast and whore, after so clear a light and powerful preaching so long enjoyed,—towards the latter end of the harvest, and summer growing more bright than ever,—who yet in hypocrisy deny this to be their aim, and yet their deeds do so manifest it that all the world accounts them Popish, and to be of his faction, and so they merit the title of the number of his name, being spirits such as Rome hath not worse in malice and enmity against God's witnesses: how a man's thoughts, I say, should excuse many of these as innocent, from presumptuous sins at least, yea, and this great transgression also, is as hard not to think it as the thing itself is hard to be thought of them. For their venom, rage, subtlety, hypocrisy, and underhand opposing the saints is such as the godly do almost generally suspect them for this sin. And, indeed, what other principle could act men so cannot well be imagined. Their case being in this worse than that of the Pharisees, in that they had been brought up in darkness and ignorance of the righteousness of God and of the Messiah, when the ministry of John and of Christ came upon them, calling on them to acknowledge and embrace Christ as the Messiah, whom, being but a carpenter's son, they never acknowledged. And yet they sinned that sin, through their smothering that new light, because their owning him would have put themselves out of credit, and have set up Christ.

But these men in this our age have been brought up in the contrary truth and light, and have both professed it, subscribed to it, and preached it; and yet they love this darkness of Popery, and embrace this carted* whore, and, courting her, would bring her into their tents in the face of Moses and of the whole congregation; and they loathe the truth of the gospel and of the faith they once received, and this in the face of the clearest sunshine and light that ever shone round about them. One would think God should destroy them visibly; but they must do one exploit for him first. Their destiny further is, that they should kill the witnesses for this their scorching them through the powerful testimony of their lives and prophecy, and so be even with them, and overcome them yet before the fifth vial comes. And though, as yet, they have not got a full victory, yet they are now a-making war, and shall prevail, and banish and disperse them among tongues and nations throughout Europe. But by that time the fifth vial comes, these witnesses in the end shall again have overcome them, who are indeed that 'number of the beast's name,' the last of all his company to be overcome, as chap. xv. 2, they being the last sort of his champions, even these 'names of men,' ὀνόματα ἀνθρώπων, as they are called, chap. xi. 13; and they shall be

* Probably referring to an old mode of punishing disreputable persons, who were dragged through the streets in a cart, with the executioner by their side. The guilt of these abettors of Popery was all the greater, because the abominations of Popery had been already detected and exposed.—ED.

killed instead of the witnesses at their resurrection, as the first degree and preparation to the fifth vial.

The fifth vial is upon the *throne*, or seat of the beast; which is plainly Rome itself, which was the old seat of the dragon, the heathenish empire, which Satan did, as it were, openly govern that empire under heathenish idolatry. But after that, this seat was resigned by the dragon unto the Pope, at his first rising, chap. xiii. 2; which city the Sibyls long since prophesied of should again become a sheep-cot; and the Holy Ghost, in chap. xviii., that it should be 'thrown down as a millstone, and be no more found at all,' but should become 'the habitation of devils only, and the dwelling of every foul spirit' for ever. Of this vial we may say, as the disciples said to Christ, 'Now he speaketh plainly, and not in parables,' as before; only, as the other vials are to be taken in the largest sense, so I think this is, though not in a spiritual sense, for he speaks plainly, and not in figures. And therefore, as was said, chap. xiii., in the explaining of that second beast, that not alone the Pope is that beast, but concrete, and together with him, his clergy, who make up one body with him as their head. And so it may be, that by the seat of the beast here is not only and simply meant Rome, the sea and seat of that chief bishop the Pope, but it may be extended to other seas and seats that fall together with it—namely, of such of the clergy, whether in Italy or elsewhere, as cleave unto the beast, and profess themselves of his number and company, who now, under this fifth vial, are tumbled down from their usurped seats, thrones, and dignities, together with this their head, whose whole kingdom is now become full of darkness and obscurity. Yet so as eminently Rome, the proper seat of the beast, is here intended, and in the letter of this vial held forth as the subject of it upon which it falls; and with the fall of Rome the number and time of the beast's reign and kingdom is reckoned as fulfilled—namely, his twelve hundred and sixty years allotted him 'to do' in, which years have now their period. And although the popedom remains to be destroyed by the seventh vial, yet his glory is here reckoned as gone and taken from him, and he is now reserved alive only for a further and more glorious execution. Therefore it is said, 'his kingdom is darkened,' for now he is put by his seven hills, his seat; his seven-headed kingdom is no longer reckoned of, as Mr Mede reasons. But that which hath chiefly confirmed me in the opinion that the period of the beast's kingdom is by the Holy Ghost reckoned to end with this fall of the city of Rome is, that I observe the 17th and 18th chapters are principally and on purpose added, first, to present this city of Rome in all her bravery before her ruin, as chap. xvii., and then to sing a solemn, stately, and triumphant song for her ruin and destruction, as chap. xviii. throughout Now that the Holy Ghost should make this ruin of the city that hath so long reigned, as ver. 18 of chap. xvii., over the kings of the earth, so great a matter of triumph, and so eminent above all things else in this book, imports that the last and fatal period of that fourth Roman monarchy, of which that city was to be the seat, and the beast the last head, is here to be accounted as come, and the number of its years expired, the beast's kingdom being now as good as at an end. He may indeed raise some trouble, and again make some resistance, after the sixth vial, but reign any more he shall not; for, otherwise, this had been *pæana triumphalem ante victoriam canere*, to triumph before an assured victory, which the Holy Ghost would not have done upon this occasion, but reserved it till after the seventh vial.

But then was to come another manner of triumph, more high and glorious, for the marriage of the Lamb, when Rome's ruin and the beast's kingdom

will be forgotten. And, therefore, God ordained it to be performed at the funeral of this great whore, the city of Rome. And it is much that two whole chapters should be spent on purpose to set forth the pageants of the church's triumph over her. Surely here this great kingdom ends, and therefore, after that, the church prepares for the Lamb's marriage, chap. xix.

Now that that whore presented in those two chapters, the 17th and 18th, is this city of Rome, is evident by the last words of the 17th chapter,—the whore is that 'great city that reigns over the kings of the earth,'—and so those two chapters are but a fuller setting forth and enlargement of this same fifth vial, as being the most eminent and the most fatal of the vials upon the beast. Which chapters therefore I shall not need to spend time in explicating of, but do now hasten to the exposition of the 11th chapter, which was by me mainly intended, because that contains the state of the church, and the condition of it in these times, and those that are next a-coming upon us. And I join that next unto the vials, because these vials serve directly to expound it; and it mentioning the four first vials, goes on then to shew what shall befall the churches of the Reformation under the fourth vial, and before the fifth: with which fifth vial those twelve hundred and sixty years, or forty-two months of the Pope's kingdom, there in that chapter computed, are to end and expire, according to the notion even now given. And as the 14th chapter shewed us the condition of the church within itself to the times of the fourth vial, as was proved; so this 11th chapter begins where the 14th chapter ends. And from thence the supplement of the story of the church's various condition is to be fetched, as will appear in the opening of it.

CHAPTER IV.

The exposition of the 11th chapter, which was but briefly touched upon in the First Part, the larger explication being reserved here, as its proper place.

SECTION I.

Prolegomena.—Five generals premised for the understanding of it.

THE first is to shew *who* this angel here spoken of is, and *what* is his purpose, and *when* the time of his coming down here in this vision. And for this, know that the angel who comes down here, and delivers all the contents of this 11th chapter unto ver. 15, unto John, and that immediately by word of mouth, is Christ himself; as appears by his words, ver. 3, 'I will give power to my two witnesses,' which no created angel could speak. And observe withal, that Christ himself doth speak nowhere in this book, but only in this and in the first chapter. And, above all, observe that this is the very same angel that came to Daniel in the end of his prophecy, to confirm it with an oath, chap xii. of that his prophecy. This, his alike gesture here and there doth argue: there, 'lifting up his right hand to heaven, and swearing by him who liveth for ever,' ver. 7; and so here, taking the very same oath, with the same ceremony also, chap. x. 6. And then you may take notice that his oath is taken about the very same thing and to the same purpose. You shall find that that prophecy of Daniel containeth, though more confusedly, the very same things that this prophecy of the Revelation does more clearly. As, namely, the tyranny of the fourth Roman monarchy, and the oppression of the church thereby, first by the heathenish empire, then under the last head of it, the Pope, of whom Daniel had prophesied, chap. xi. of his prophecy, from the 36th verse to the end; after whose time expired, as Daniel had shewn, should come in a fifth monarchy of the saints, chap. vii. All which things you have in this book, and the visions of them more distinctly presented. As, namely, how under the seventh trumpet, after the time of the beast expired, that same glorious kingdom was to come in. Thus, in the subject-matter of both they do agree; and so also in setting down the time determined by God, how long this last head, the Pope and his tyranny, should continue, do these two prophecies and these two angels both agree.

For concerning this time, and the ending of the tyranny of this last head (the Pope) over the church, after which should come in the kingdom of Christ, it is that the angel there in Daniel doth take that his oath, and discourseth of that his time, and the manner of the ending of his tyranny, in that 12th chapter of Daniel, and at the end of that whole prophecy. And, answerably, concerning the ending of that very time, and the manner of the ending of the beast's tyranny, and the succeeding of Christ's kingdom when that is ended, that is the very thing that the angel here sweareth about, and in like manner discourseth of just at the end of this first seal-

prophecy. So that his oath and speech, both there and here, are about the very same thing. And observe the accord in both: for there, Dan. xii. 7, he swears that 'it'—namely, the Pope's reign—'should be for a time, times, and half a time,' so mentioning it there confusedly, and more indefinitely; 'and when he'—that is, that last king, the Pope, the head of that monarchy, whom Daniel had last prophesied of in the foregoing chapter, from the 36th verse to the end—'shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, then all these things shall be fulfilled;' that is, then is the time when these things, which he had spoken of to be done just before Christ's kingdom, shall begin to take end and accomplishment.

Now in a direct correspondency and answerableness unto the angel in Daniel doth this angel here come down in this vision now, at the very end of that time, according to that course of time run out in this first seal-prophecy, which that angel in Daniel had sworn about; even now when this fatal period of the fourth monarchy, according to the series of this vision, was near approaching.

And first he renews the oath then taken, and swears again here, chap. x. 7, that 'time shall be no longer;' but that 'in the days of the seventh trumpet, the mystery shall be fulfilled which is spoken of by all the prophets;' that is, the fifth monarchy, or the kingdom of Christ, which was to succeed the other, of which all the prophets speak, as you have it Acts iii. 21. These words of the angel's oath do imply that, now that the visions of all times past in the former seal-prophecy, from the primitive times, had brought things to the last scene of the world's time; *Now*, says he, as standing in the extremity, and towards the approaching end of all, 'time shall be no longer;' or, as Mr Brightman well interprets the word, '*Delay* shall be no longer.' Stay now but a little, says Christ; here you are at the last sands; tarry but till the seventh trumpet blows, it will end all.

And accordingly, the angel here in this 11th chapter explains distinctly, by word of mouth, what and how much that time of the Pope, mentioned in the oath in Daniel, was; and what that 'accomplishing to scatter the holy people'—which in the oath in Daniel was made the immediate forerunner of the fulfilling of all things—also was. So that indeed this 11th chapter here is, as concerning the point of time, but an explication of that 12th chapter of Daniel, at least of that part thereof, and by this angel's oath and speech there. And it is the same angel cometh here to express distinctly, as became the Revelation, what was there delivered darkly and indefinitely. And it is as if the angel here had spoken thus, or to this effect, in more plain words, for the comfort of the church:—

'Now, beloved, I come now, after so long a while worn out, to bid you to 'lift up your heads; for time now in these days of the sixth trumpet is 'expiring, and my kingdom is at the door: for the times of the beast, pro-'phesied of by Daniel,—of which beast you shall hear more in this little 'book-prophecy, which is open in my hand, and which I here bring with 'me, and give you,—do now shortly end and determine. Daniel's period of 'a time, times, and half a time, allotted the beast, the Pope, the last head 'and king, to reign in the fourth Roman monarchy, is now in these times 'very shortly to expire, and with him the times of this present oppressing 'world. And that you, my church, may know, and have infallible warning, 'when the expiring of this beast's time to scatter the holy people shall be, I 'will both explain to you how long this time in Daniel, where it is but con-'fusedly mentioned, is allotted him to scatter the holy people, my witnesses; 'and I will also tell you how or in what manner it shall be that he shall

'accomplish, as Daniel's phrase is, to scatter the power of the holy people; 'that is, for your comfort I will reveal to you and describe the very manner 'of that eminent and last scattering, which in the oath in Daniel is made 'the immediate sign when Antichrist's ruin and all those other things should 'begin to be fulfilled. And further, I will present to you what the face of 'the church shall be in that age immediately before the scattering the holy 'people, that so you may have together at once both a true compute of the 'time, as also of such occurrences, and such a face of the sky presented, as 'may be an eminent signal unto you: that when you see these things done, 'then know that the time is expiring and determining. And this I myself do 'thus immediately inform you of, because that last scattering will be so great 'a one as all the faith you have will be put to it: and therefore it is that I 'have took that oath, as it were, *now*, in these times; for that your faith 'had need of it to confirm it. Which oath, therefore, do you remember and 'have in your eye, for even now your redemption draws nigher than you are 'aware of.'

This is the first thing I premise.

2d Prolegomenon.

Now, in the second place, observe in how fit a scene or place in this comedy, or vision of all times successively, hitherto acted before John, and by him penned for us, doth this angel Christ here take to enter upon the stage, and act this part in. You before heard at large how that the seals and trumpets, chap. vi.–ix., contained one prophecy, that ran over all the times from John until the end; and then, that the little book that is open in the hand of this angel here, chap. x., doth contain another prophecy of the church, which in like manner begins at the times of John, and so again runs over all times unto the end.

Now this angel steps in now, just now, as in the last age, and towards the expiring of the sixth trumpet, and so of that first revolution of all time, with his new or second prophecy in his hand ready to be delivered. And yet because that some sands or space of time remained under the first prophecy not yet completed, he therefore in this, as a convenient season between both, fills up that little space of time that this first prophecy had yet left to continue, with an additional discourse of his own, to inform the church what special occurrences were now, before the final consummation of all under the seventh trumpet, to fall out in this small interim, as a warning to them when the end of all, even of both prophecies, (viz. of this seal-prophecy and also of that other book-prophecy,) should be.

Now the sixth trumpet, which is the Turkish empire, we yet see standing. An utter end of the Roman empire had been as completely set forth in the sixth seal as it could be; and only now the ending of it remained, and so there was no other matter of that kind, or belonging thereunto, to be added. And yet that being to continue some hundreds of years before its ending should be, and the seventh trumpet should blow, he therefore fills up that space of time until the seventh trumpet should blow, and entertains John with relating what special occurrences, that most nearly concerned his people, should fall out in the western church, over which the Pope had the dominion, now towards the end of both Turkish and Popish empire, and so in this last age, before the ending of these times. Which occurrences, though they properly belonged to the book-prophecy,—which, as was said, properly takes cognisance of matters of the church,—yet they fitly come in here between both prophecies, as the signal of the ending of the full course of both stages of

And when he had thus, in this discourse, filled up that remaining this interlude with such occurrences as were indeed yet to fall out with it, in the times before the sixth trumpet's ending; then, I say, udes his discourse with this, 'The second woe is past;' that is, the the sixth trumpet ends also hereabouts: and so then, as in its time, blows the seventh.

3d Prolegomenon.

ve the manner of his delivering all this to John: namely, that he is his narration as a chorus, or as an interlocutor in a comedy useth is speech, and not by vision only; wherein he opens and explains uld not by vision well have been understood, and therefore gives it of mouth. And as thus this angel doth here, so the like doth that the 17th chapter. And I the rather put together the parallel of these two angels, chap. xvii., and here, chap. xi., because that, as e of him there was to give an interpretation and explication who the as, so his scope here is to give a clear interpretation of the times of st and whore, and the immediate tokens or signals that shall forerun ng of them. And look, as in that 17th chapter, when one of the f the vials, and, as it is thought, the fifth, gives the interpretation beast and whore is, he doth it by a speech, merely as an interlocutor, n John; so here, in like manner doth this angel. Yet so, as you o observe, that his narration here in this 11th chapter is first oc- by a vision presented of the face and state of the church as it be in that last age wherein these things are to be accomplished: of a temple presented standing, with an outward court surrounding n altar in it, and two witnesses standing before the Lord, and minis- it. Which vision first to have been made unto John is tacitly im- that the first entrance of his speech begins with bidding John to d to do a real act towards the temple, even to measure it. And e such a temple, &c., must needs have been presented to his view. thereupon observe, how that this vision of a temple, and of an out- rt adjoined, is made the ground or occasion of the angel's following as from which the angel takes the rise of his following discourse. this vision of the temple's measuring, and giving its outward court Gentiles, is the first occurrence that is here presented as belonging to e wherein time is to expire, as from whence he takes the ground of discourse, wherein he explains how much time the beast was to have, r and when it should end. Which discourse, after that explained, again with the relation of another occurrence, ver. 7, that shall fall r this, in that age, as the last signal of all. And this is done just in manner as, chap. xvii., one of the angels of the seven vials, who e must be supposed to stand in the times of the vials, being to make ption of the beast, and of the whore,—namely, Rome, the seat of the monarchy,—in all the times allotted her; yet takes his rise from a f that whore, as then in her last old age, and in the times of the e should appear, 'drunk with the blood of the saints,' just before her And yet there, in that his speech about her, he speaks of her as in ole time of reigning she should be. Just so here, this angel (Christ) ters upon the stage but as an actor, under the times of the sixth , and in the very declension of it, and takes his oath as under those and then presents to John a vision of the face of the church, in that age, under the latter times of the sixth trumpet, as of a temple which

in these present times he will have measured by John, as representing the persons of the saints of that age, and leaving out the outward court of it, as to be given again unto the Gentiles.

And then, from that occasion,—it being part of that scattering the power of the holy people which Daniel aimed at,—he plays the part of an interlocutor, and makes a narration of the whole times of Popery, which, after this their treading down this outward court of the temple, were to expire. And he takes occasion also to relate and discourse of that opposition which the witnesses should make against the beast, or these Gentiles, all the time of his whole reign; and so describes them, ver. 3–6. And all this as an interlocutor, or a chorus in a comedy, useth to do. Till at last he comes again to that last occurrence which belonged to that age wherein he stood when he began his speech,—namely, now towards the end of the sixth trumpet,—as that which should then befall these witnesses. With which he determines his speech about them, from ver. 7 to the end of the chapter. Unto the better and clearer understanding of which, all his former description of them, and what else he related concerning them, had only made the way; namely, to shew, both what that time was, which in Daniel had been so darkly delivered, and how it should end; and how, to use the phrase in Daniel, the 'scattering of the holy people' should be accomplished. So then—

4th Prolegomenon.

Observe how fitly the words of the oath in Daniel do agree with all the things delivered in this 11th chapter, from ver. 1 unto the seventh trumpet, ver. 15, where the angel's speech ends.

Now those things are reducible unto two heads:—

1. This angel's computation and interpretation of that time mentioned in Daniel; which when it ends, the fourth monarchy shall begin to end also, and shortly after it the kingdom of Christ begins.

2. Such eminent occurrences as shall fall out at the ending of it, as signals thereof. Or rather, thus:—

In the angel's oath in Daniel, four things were intimated:—

1. The time that the beast, the last head of the Roman monarchy, should have to reign; which was 'a time, times, and half a time.'

2. *A holy people*, who all that time should yet continue to oppose him, and whom he should oppress.

3. Who yet, towards the end, should get some power against him; so it is there called, 'the power of the holy people.' And—

4. Which power of theirs he should, in the ending of that time, scatter, and themselves also, and that with an eminent scattering, which yet is the accomplishment or last act of his so doing; that is, he should never scatter them any more, but after that his reign was to end, and their mourning and oppression to cease.

Now answerable to this, you here have—

1. That time, confusedly mentioned in Daniel, but here exactly computed by a double account, (not to fail,) both of months and also of days: the one, as expressing Antichrist's whole time of reigning, even forty-two months; and the other, the holy people's time to oppose him in, even twelve hundred and sixty days, though yet in sackcloth and oppression. But so as both have one and the same period; and as they begun, so they end together.

2. You have the *holy people* in Daniel here interpreted by Christ to be his *two witnesses*.

3. You have the *power* of this holy people all that while set forth, espe-

cially that power they obtained in their last days; 'I will give to my witnesses,' &c., ver. 3. They had power given them to erect a temple, backed with a mighty party of an outward court. And out of that temple they have had power given them to pour out four vials already; so as that 'if any man hurt them, they will scorch him with fire,' &c., ver. 5. And in the weakest days of their prophecy, they have had power to 'shut heaven, that it rained not,' ver. 6, &c.

4. This angel here shews, how in the end of this time, when they are even about to cast off their sackcloth, and to finish their testimony against this beast, ver. 7,—so the word in the Greek is, *are about to finish*, &c.,—that then this their power shall be scattered, their outward court trodden down, and so they left exposed to the beast's fury and outrage, to be by him 'scattered among the nations and killed;' which nations shall 'see their dead bodies lying in the streets,' &c. And then he gives a particular description of this their oppressing, unto ver. 14; telling us withal, for our comfort, that thus they shall accomplish to scatter them, being never to scatter them again any more, after they are once risen again, so ver. 11–13. And thus you see how this 11th chapter is but a comment on the oath in Daniel.

5th Prolegomenon.

Lastly, observe this in general concerning the joint mention or bringing in both these occurrences, and this computation of times together. They are mentioned thus together principally and chiefly in this respect, to shew how this whole series of time should end and expire; namely, with those occurrences here mentioned. So that the angel's scope is not simply to mention this period of the twelve hundred and sixty days, &c., only to compute it, though so also he makes mention of it; but withal to shew how that with these exploits and occurrences, or when these things here mentioned should fall out, this time was near its end and expiration. Whereby this angel here doth directly hit the very aim and scope of that his former oath taken before Daniel; which was, that with the very expiring of that his allotted time, he should accomplish to scatter the power of the holy people. And therefore he so mentions this whole term of time here, as withal to shew how it shall at last be accomplished and fulfilled; and to that end he mentions such particular exploits as this beast to his very last shall play, even till his kingdom be taken from him.

Now to explain this further:—In the 13th chapter, the beast had 'power given him to do,' as the word is, 'forty-two months;' and during that time to 'make war with the saints, and overcome them.' And power was given him 'over all tongues, and nations, and kindreds;' that is, over the ten kingdoms of Europe, ver. 5–7. Now the Gentiles here, and that idolatrous company that worship this beast, ver. 3, 4 of that 13th chapter, and that set up this power of his, are all one and the same; and their lease here, of treading down the holy city, runs, and is made, as you see, for the very same term of years here that it is there. Only mark the different scope of the mentioning of them in that 13th chapter and here: namely, that here it comes in to shew how this whole time should end, and fully be accomplished; and also with a narration of that very particular last war and victory, which this idolatrous company should obtain against the holy people, even their last scattering them before the ending of this their time. But it comes in there, as it was considered wholly and entirely, as yet through all times to be fulfilled; with all those wars and slaughters which in that whole time Antichrist should make against the saints. So in chap. xiii.

Now that the mention of these two computations of that whole time does thus come in here in relation to these last exploits and war of Antichrist, at and towards the ending of that time, is many ways evident. Of both which I shall demonstrate this severally and apart. And—

1. For the mention of their 'treading down the holy city for forty-two months;' this comes in but, as you may observe it, upon that one particular occurrence of giving up the outward court anew to the Gentiles, to this or the like purpose; as if the angel had said, 'Cast out that same outward court of the temple of this present age, which hath indeed helped against the Papists, and kept them off, but yet hath defiled the churches; leave them out, for this court is given to the Gentiles now in this last age, for them to re-enter upon and to get power over. And so with this last treading down and overcoming that outward court, which once they had possessed, but lost from their dominions, it is that they shall have accomplished that whole term of forty-two months allotted them for treading down of the holy city, namely Europe, the destined seat of this church and of their reign.' And thus their full dominion over the whole for forty-two months' space or length of time shall be made good by this, that however they had lost for a while part of their dominion over it, yet they regaining this outward court now towards the end, they will be found to have possessed the whole forty-two months, first and last. That look, as upon the giving in of the last payment, we use to make mention of the whole sum as paid; so here, upon that last eminent regaining their lost power over some of the European kingdoms, the whole term of the time of their reigning comes to be mentioned.

This I here premise, to prevent that great mistake which hath diverted interpreters from taking the measuring this temple here, and giving up the outward court, to be meant of some special occurrence to fall out, or some act to be done to the churches of these latter times; but they rather take it of the Papists themselves, their possessing throughout all ages the face of the church, which they interpret the outward court, because of this that is added, and that followeth upon it, 'and they shall tread down the holy city for forty-two months.' As if it imported, that after the outward court is given up to them, they should have so many years of reigning over it. Which if it were so, it could not be meant so particularly of the temple or church in this last age, and the outward court thereof. But this, according to the former coherence given, need not divert any man's thoughts from the present age to former times; as it hath done some men's, to think the churches of the primitive times to be the temple measured, and the outward court to be the outward face of the church, which the Pope hath possessed these 1200 years. The coherence may easily be found to be this: as if the angel had said, 'Measure anew the temple you now see standing in these last times of the sixth trumpet, and of Antichrist before his fall, and cast out the outward court thereof; for it is again given to the Gentiles: and so—namely, with this last treading down of it, and regaining, as it were, the whole anew—they shall fully accomplish their allotted time of treading down the holy city, namely, their forty-two months.'

But the removal of this mistake more fully I refer to the *Appendix* that follows. Only for the present, for a confirmation that this is, and may well be, the meaning of the coherence of these words, observe—

(1.) It is not said that they shall tread down the outward court for forty-two months; but the holy city, which is much vaster than the outward court: the greater part of which city, namely of Europe, they kept the lordship over, even when the outward court was separated from them and not yet recovered.

So that to me the outward court here is one thing, and the holy city another, though this court indeed stands in the city; even as the outward court and the temple were distinct things from the holy city of Jerusalem, though standing therein, as I shall afterwards in the particular exposition more fully shew. And—

(2.) The purpose and scope of the mention of their whole time of forty-two months here, is to shew how in this latter age it should be fulfilled and ended; even in a full power and jurisdiction over the holy city, in a re-entry on that part of it, the outward court also; which is again laid common with and unto the rest of the city. And so now it may be said of them, as of a king who reigns and hath jurisdiction over a country (suppose) for fifty years; it may be said he hath reigned over it fifty years, although some few years before the end of his reign, some of his subjects haply revolted from him, if so be he were their king before the revolt, and in the end again recovered his royalty over them; the account being taken from the beginning to the end, first and last.

And one reason why Antichrist's time of 'doing' is reckoned by months, and not by days, may be to shew, that though he hath not the whole time of his reign the same continued jurisdiction, yet by months he hath, from such a time to such a time, though not the like power all that time. For so at first the Goths interrupted him much in the exercise of his power. And then—

(3.) These words, 'and they shall tread down the holy city for forty-two months,' do fitly come in, as a just reason why this outward court is now in these last times given to these Gentiles; and so do insinuate a reason why Antichrist is thus permitted again to take possession of the most and chief part, if not all, of this outward court, so as to have fair hopes of recovering all Europe again. 'And they shall,' &c. The word *καί*, or *and*, is often used as a causal particle, and notes out a reason of a thing. So then, the term of their commission over all the nations and tongues of Europe being forty-two months, and none exempted but such whose names are written in the book of life,—as you have it, chap. xiii. 7, 8,—therefore, though this outward court of carnal Protestants, and unregenerate, hath made a separation together with the true worshippers; yet they being inwardly Gentiles, and their names not written in the book of life, therefore they are given unto these Gentiles again, as being their allotted inheritance, as it were, for so long a time here mentioned; which is not fully run out as yet, in this age of the sixth trumpet, of which Christ spake this. They are yet within the bounds and date of their lease, which is forty-two months, not yet expired; and therefore they are to be re-entered upon by them. So that the mention of this their term comes thus in: as if in a suit at law, to recover one's own ground leased to one for twenty-one years, a man pleads and shews, at the eighteenth year's end, how the whole term of his lease was twenty-one years, as yet not expired; which he exhibits as a just plea why some part of it withheld from him should be restored to him, it being included in the tenure of his lease as well as the rest. Just so is it here; this outward court being within the bounds of the city, and being land belonging to the Pope by gift, for so long time,—they being not written in the Lamb's book,—and his lease of forty-two months not being expired; therefore, says the angel, here it is given or restored to him again: and so 'he shall accomplish to tread down' it, and the rest of the holy city, for forty-two months. Which are the angel's words in Daniel, chap. xii., and which this angel came to interpret.

2. And in the second place, for the mention of that other computation of 1260 days; it is yet more plain that this is brought in here principally to shew how this time should end and determine now at the last. And so that both this long description of the witnesses, and the declaring their whole time, is indeed but in order to this their last accomplishment. This is apparent by the 7th verse, which is the close of all the former narration. The words there are, 'and when they shall have finished their testimony;' that is, held out to testify, during that whole time of 1260 years. Or they may, and ought rather to be rendered, 'and when they are about to finish'—ὅταν τελέσωσι. Which notes out, not a full end first made, but a being about to make it. So that when they are about or near the finishing of this their testimony, then shall this befall them. And further, in that he spends the better half of his discourse in this chapter in the setting forth this one particular,—namely, their last scattering, upon the finishing their mentioned days of prophecy,—this apparently shews that this was the chief scope which that former part of his discourse had tended unto. And in that, although Antichrist, the beast, hath had many famous overcomings of these witnesses in former times, and killings also of them, yet that he should single out this, which also is nowhere mentioned in the larger book-prophecy, and yet here, and that haply not for the greatness of the prevailing in itself considered, but for its eminency in this respect, that it should be the last, and with which their whole time should end. Which also is made eminent by this, that after these witnesses had got so much ground upon the beast, and won a temple and an outward court from him, set up upon his ground, as it were; that then, after all this, this prevailing of his should fall on them. Hence it serveth as the most eminent prognostic and sign of their times expiring; and therefore is here mentioned. So that I shall conclude with this brief series of the coherence and connexion of one thing with another in these first verses.

Here is the same period of time twice mentioned, under a several computation: the one of forty-two months, the other of 1260 days, both which come all to one. But the one is mentioned as the time that the Pope and his company shall reign; and the other, as the time for the witnesses to prophesy in sackcloth. And they both come in, in order and reference, unto the two of those last occurrences, which shall accomplish the reign of the one and the oppression and mournful condition of the other.

1. Their whole time of treading down the holy city shall end with a recovery and treading down the outward court of the temple, the reformed churches. And so the mention of that their time comes in only in that respect, to shew how it ends. And accordingly the vision of the temple, and the angel's bidding John to measure it, comes in but as an introduction to the mention of this last occurrence. And then—

2. Being in like manner to mention the same time of 1260 days, as the time of the holy witnesses' prophecy, in order to their last scattering and oppression, he inverts the order, and first mentions the time of their prophecy, by way of a continued narration with what went before; and then after that, mentions their last scattering as the accomplishment of that their time. And it was fit that this mention of their whole time should first be immediately connected to the foresaid mention of their enemies' whole time, and the times both of the one and the other first set together, for that this latter serves to explain the former, which else were ambiguous and dark, as I shall shew hereafter; and especially, because these witnesses are mentioned as the continual opposites set up against these Gentiles, and as the

main butt and object of their malice. That same *καί*, ver. 3, '*and* I will give power,' is used here, as often elsewhere, adversatively for *but;* as if he had said: 'Whereas they have forty-two months allowed them to tread down the holy city,—Europe, the chief seat of Christian profession,—and the witnesses in the compass of that time have won a temple and an outward court from them; yet that this allotted time of their reign may therefore be made good unto them, even to the last, they shall regain that outward court of the new erected temple separated from them; *but* so as they shall not so reign all that while as to carry it without opposition, "but I will give power to," or uphold, "my two witnesses," by their testimony to oppose them continually, though in sackcloth, that whole time of 1260 days, and even at this their last treading down the outward court, to avenge themselves of these Gentiles with fire, &c. But yet for all that, these Gentiles shall go on, and in the end of these their days prevail yet further, even over these my witnesses also; and when they are about to finish their testimony, shall kill and destroy them.'

So that the mention of their time, though it comes in a good way off before, yet is in order to this their last killing; to shew, as in Daniel, how it should be accomplished.

SECTION II.

The measuring the temple, and casting out the outward court, chap. xi. 1, 2.

§ 1.—*An explication of this double computation of* 1260 *days, or forty-two months; and why they are together here mentioned.*

These things thus premised, I come to interpret the contents of this chapter, from ver. 1 to ver. 15, which are reducible to three heads:—

1. This double computation of the times above-mentioned.

2. The occurrences that were to fall out in those times of Antichrist, in the age just before their fatal period, unto the accomplishment whereof those occurrences do conduce; which age, as I take it, is that that we live now in.

3. What is withal said of the two witnesses, as woven in by the angel in his discourse of them, by way of describing them, in order to the explanation of what should at last befall them.

1. For these computations of the times, both of the beast's reign, and the witnesses' oppression here mentioned; these things are to be explicated about them:—

(1.) That they are both the same term of time that in the oath in Daniel the angel intended. This appears by chap. xii. ver. 6 compared with ver. 14, for what in ver. 6 is called 1260 days, is in the 14th verse of the aforesaid chapter expressed by this, 'a time, times, and half a time.'

(2.) He makes this double computation of that time, first by months, then by days; so without ambiguity to explain how much time was meant in Daniel by that indefinite number, 'time, times, and a half.' Which, as it is laid down in Daniel, is altogether ambiguous; for who could tell what is meant by a time and times? or who could tell but that a hundred or a thousand years might be the time, and ten thousand the times here meant, they being only expressed in the plural number and indefinitely, as well as two of those times? Therefore, clearly to free it of all ambiguity, he explains this first time here by forty-two months. Now, reckoning twelve months to a year, these forty-two months make three years and a half. So then, by

time is meant a year; by *times*, two years; and by *half a time*, half a year more. And yet because there was some ambiguity in that also, in that some nations reckon but twenty-eight days in a month, whereas others reckon more,—so the Jews reckon twenty-eight, but the Egyptians thirty days,—therefore he reckons the same time by days also, even 1260 days; which forty-two months do make up, reckoning thirty days to a month.

Now all these are not solary days, that is, natural days, consisting of day and night, but the prophetical days; as in Daniel a day is put for a year, and a week for seven years, and so thirty days for thirty years, and 1260 days for 1260 years. And that thus they are to be taken appears by this, that the witnesses, ver. 9, are said to lie in the view of all nations, as being haply banished out among them, for three days and a half; and their enemies are said to send gifts one to another in the meantime. Which if they were but three natural days and a half, all this in three natural days and a half could not be done.

(3.) By joining together these two computations here, and so shewing them to be the same, he thereby clears the mention of them, as they are apart named, chap. xii. and chap. xiii., of which otherwise there might have been a doubt, whether the forty-two months, chap. xiii., had been 1260 days of years. But by thus linking them together in this 11th chapter, it is made certain that those numbers are the same.

(4.) Though both Daniel there, and the angel here, do mention only the times of the Pope's reign, who is the last head of the Roman monarchy; and not the whole time from John's days, but only the latter part of it for the last 1260 years under the Pope; yet so as this was sufficient enough for the computation of the whole time that the visions of the Revelation do run through, and served fully enough to shew the contemporariousness of things in both prophecies, and to shew when the fourth monarchy should end, and so when the fifth should be towards its beginning. Which was his principal aim; and therefore, as in the 17th chapter, ver. 8, he explains who this beast was, and what he should be at last, so in this chapter he shews what the time of this beast's reigning is, and when it should end.

Now to demonstrate all these:—

1. This explication of this time may serve as a sufficient measure of the computation of the whole time spoken of in the Revelation. For if you know but either when this time of the Pope's reign begins or when it ends, you, who live in these latter days, may know how much time the prophecy of this whole book runs over. We know by story when John began to write this prophecy, even ninety-four years after Christ, or thereabouts. So that it is about 1550 years since John. Now 1260 years are to be allowed the beast, the Pope, from his beginning to his end. And to know when and in what age he began, the Holy Ghost hath given us a hint and character, chap. xvii.; telling us that he riseth one hour with the ten kings, which was not long after the year of Christ 400. So that 300 years are all that before that, even from John's time, do belong to the primitive times, before the Pope's reign. And then, after the end of this Pope's or beast's time, there is but the Turks' ruin to come, (which is the second woe mentioned here, ver. 14,) and then comes in the New Jerusalem. And if we who live in these last days could but know when he either begins his time or ends it, we might easily tell, at least with a conjectural knowledge, how long it will be from the incarnation of Christ unto his kingdom here on earth, which is the fifth monarchy.

2. I might also at large shew how this computation, coming in here in

this chapter, shews the true synchronising and contemporaneousness of things both in the seal and book-prophecy, which was necessary somewhere to be done, and is here in this chapter most fitly done between both these prophecies. For the sixth trumpet of the seal-prophecy is, ver. 14, made to end upon, or not long after, the ending of the Pope's reign, whose story belongs to the book-prophecy. For, says the angel there, after the rising of the witnesses, 'The second woe is past, and behold the third woe cometh quickly.' Now that second woe is the sixth trumpet of the seal-prophecy, (so chap. viii. 13,) and the passing of it away is the sixth vial in the book-prophecy, the effect of which is the ruin of the Turk, or at least a preparation thereunto by the calling of the Jews. And then the seventh trumpet begins with the seventh vial. And so, as it is probably thought, these 1260 years of the beast and the rising of the witnesses do end with the fifth vial, after which the sixth vial shall not stay long.

And it is probable that the angel's division of things into this double series, of six seals and six trumpets, is suited to his division of all times: which, from John's time to the kingdom of Christ, he branches either into the time of the beast's reign, which he defines to be 1260 years; or the time before his rising, which he defines not. For the beginning and ending of the beast's time being once known, thereby the other times foregoing, or the primitive times, might easily be computed. So as, when we know, through the help of this angel's speech in this chapter, that the book-prophecy and the seal-prophecy do meet towards their ending and closure downwards; then, how they run along upwards is not uneasy to conjecture. For the seal-prophecy being branched into two so equal divisions of six seals, chap. vi, and then six trumpets, chap. vii.–ix.; the six seals containing the story of the empire till the beast's rising, and so taking up all that tract of the primitive times before the beast's 1260 years do begin; it is therefore likely that the six trumpets do contain the story of the empire during those 1260 years in which the Pope is to reign. And then, as they end not far off from each other, as was even now shewed, so also the times of these six trumpets, and the beast's reign of 1260 years, should begin not far off of each other. Thus the mention of this one term or period of time here serves, as you see, for the measure of the computation of the whole times of this book, and both prophecies of it; and so comes fitly in between both for such a purpose.

And, lastly, the reasons why the Holy Ghost singleth out only the times of this last head, the Pope, thus to be the rule and measure whereby to sum and cast up the account of all the times of this book, are—

(1.) For that the beast's reign was to have the longest time allotted it of any monarchy after Christ, and the longest of all the heads of the Roman monarchy foregoing him; yea, it was to contain as much time as had passed from Rome's first building until his rising, and so would afford a computation of the greatest part of that time, and indeed three parts of the whole time from John until the kingdom of Christ.

(2.) The matters of this book being not so fully to be opened till about the time of the end, as it is in Dan. xii. 4; if the times of the beast, whose reign was to continue till towards the end, should then come to be known, then the whole time from John downward would be known also by them that live in these latter days, for whose benefit and comfort, as most concerning them to know it, this computation was made and here given.

(3.) This beast, the Pope, being the last head of the fourth or Roman monarchy, which but for him had failed, but was in him healed again and

restored; to know when he should end, and with him that monarchy, this would be inkling enough of the approach of Christ's kingdom, which is immediately to succeed it. To give the inkling of which, for the church's comfort in these latter days, was the thing herein principally aimed at. And—

(4.) This beast being to be the most eminent oppressor of the church in the times after Christ; therefore the computation of his time, beginning and ending, and the oppression of the witnesses by him, would be most acceptable to be known, and so be most inquired after by the church.—And thus much for the computation of the times here mentioned.

§ 2.—*The occurrences that fall out towards the expiring of these times here computed: and, first, a general view and division of them.*

As Christ was thus careful, as you have seen, to give us this computation of times; so further, for our comfort, he makes a relation of such occurrences also as should fall out towards the ending and expiration of these times: which is the second head we are to explain.

And as the computation of Antichrist's times was twofold, so answerably the chief occurrences of things appertaining to the accomplishment of those times are two :—

1. The re-giving up the outward court to the Gentiles, with the treading down whereof they are to end their whole reign and time of the treading down the holy city.

2. Their killing the witnesses, with which their 1260 days of prophesying in sackcloth do end also. The one is annexed as the signal of the period of their reign, and the ending of their forty-two months; the other as the signal of the accomplishment of these witnesses' oppression for 1260 days, with this most eminent victory of the Gentiles over them.

And then again observe how each of these occurrences have two others here mentioned with them, as conjunct appendixes to them, or occasions of them :—

1. The giving up the outward court to the Gentiles is accompanied with a measuring the temple by John, representing the godly of that age, who leaves out the outward court, as being ordained by God to be given up to the Gentiles.

2. This last killing the witnesses is much occasioned, and, in a more especial manner, enemies are provoked unto it, by the hurt these witnesses did them by fire in the times just before, as we shall see anon; in revenge of which they are encouraged to kill them.

Or, for the better conceiving all these, I cast them into this mould :—

John and the angel standing here in the very extremities of time, even the times of the fourth vial, (this age, as I take it,) wherein Antichrist's reign is drawing near to its end; John hath represented to him, as an introduction unto all that follows, the face of the church in that age, and is himself bidden to represent the work of the godly of that age towards that church. And—

1. The church in this age is represented to him as the temple standing in the holy city Jerusalem,—as it was represented to Ezekiel, chap. xl., which he also measured with a reed, as John is bidden to do here,—namely, the temple inward, in which the priest only was to come, and in which stands the altar, with a company of true worshippers; but round about it, as enclosing the temple without, lies a vast outward court, into which (as of old, the multitudes and crowd of the people of the Jews professing the true God,

so here) all sorts of professors of true worship do come. This temple, the church of this age, is moreover represented as adorned within with golden candlesticks, and two stately olive-trees, ver. 4, being two eminent witnesses and prophets that minister before God in his church. And the Gentiles, they possess the city already, and have done a long time, and are still to possess it, till their forty-two months be expired. But the temple, and the outward court about it, of late days erected in this city, they have been kept out of; and so could not come at these witnesses, who are within the temple, nor have been able to overcome and kill them, as in former times; against whom, notwithstanding, in that they have so tormented them with fire and other plagues out of this temple, they are even mad again with vexation, and an eager desire to be avenged on them. But now, before the expiring of their forty-two months, God being angry, both with the carnal gospellers in the outward court, so profanely mixing themselves with his worshippers, and laying themselves to his building and temple, and also with the carnal gospelling of the two witnesses among them, and with the imperfection of his temple building, not yet answering the pattern, and therefore intending to erect a purer temple; he—

2. Bids John, representing the godly of that age, measure the temple anew, and so begins to make a new reformation therein, more answerable to the pattern in the mount; for he is not pleased with the old one that now hath stood so long. And therefore, in this new reformation, he commands John to leave out that outward court, as intending, after his purer churches shall thus first have, as it were, excommunicated them, to give up that outward court to these Gentiles, who have already took possession of the city, and kept it a long time, but shall now again enter upon this outward court, it being within their lease and demise. And so with this overrunning the outward court of the church, shall they accomplish their reign over the whole city, being then to be driven out of all for ever, which makes them so angry, as you have it ver. 18.

And thus they having gained the outward court, which fenced and kept safe the witnesses, as from persecution by the Papists, who yet had vexed and plagued them, by shooting of wild-fire out of the temple, though they had also shot back again that which had hurt the witnesses all that while: but now the beast can come to them to overcome them and kill them quite, for their outward court was won, and so utterly scatter the power of the holy people; but yet so as with this the days of their oppression shall cease, this being the accomplishment of their years of scattering, and the last war wherein Antichrist shall any way prevail. He (the relics of him left) shall indeed make head again before the seventh vial, but it shall not come to a victory as this doth.

§ 3.—*The occurrences, ver.* 1, 2, (*the measuring the temple, altar, &c., and the leaving out the outward court, and treading down the holy city,*) *more particularly and fully explained.*

So then, here are two things to be explained:—

1. What this temple and outward court are, and what the measuring of the temple, &c., and the leaving out and treading down the outward court and city. And—

2. Who these witnesses are, what their description, and what this their last killing.

For the first; I will make good and establish what I think to be the true interpretation, and then consult those other false interpretations given of it.

It is wonderful to me to see how exactly this vision, in the whole series of it, represents the present face, the affairs, stirrings, and alterations now a-working in the churches of Europe; the type and antitype so fully answering and suiting each the other.

1. For the first; the holy city here, wherein these Gentiles have a lease of forty-two months' reign, are these kingdoms of Europe, which for these thousand years and upwards have been the metropolis and chief seat of Christian profession, as Jerusalem of old was of the worship of the true God; which, therefore, in the following part of this book-prophecy, is made, from the rise of the beast, the only stage of all, until that New Jerusalem and holy city, which comes from heaven and succeeds this; this being in the meantime the Old Jerusalem, as that the New. Yet—

2. This city, for the punishment of the world, God permits the Gentiles to tread down for forty-two months, alluding to that expression which Christ used of the sacking of that Jerusalem in Judea, by the Romans, Luke xxi. 24. Now the beast, the Pope of Rome, with his idolatrous crew, they are these Gentiles; and so called because they set up the image of that worship which was practised under heathenish Rome and Gentilism; so chap. xiii. 15. And as the hundred and forty-four thousand, the company of true worshippers, are called the Israel of God, so are these called the Gentiles; their religion and worship being, as was said, the image of the first heathenish religion, under the heathen empire, the first beast. And this city they were to have power and jurisdiction in till forty-two months were fulfilled, as in chap. xiii. appears. But—

3. Towards the end of their time, there begins a great part of this city to fall from them, though they still kept possession of the greatest part; and they lost much ground, and enclosure and separation being made from them, and within it a temple built, namely, churches separated from Antichrist, which you heard of in chap. xv. And further, as that in Jerusalem was built on the north side of that city, Ps. xlviii. 2, so is this temple built in the northern parts of Europe,—the city here meant, as was foretold in Isa. xlix. 12, and Dan. xi. 44,—for in these northern kingdoms hath been the reformation of religion.

4. Unto which temple there hath been an outward court laid of carnal and unregenerate professors, who have made the greatest show in this building, and took up so much of the room, that although true churches and temples, by reason of the true worshippers among them, have been set up, yet they have been defiled with the addition of an outward court, into which all sorts came. So that indeed these reformed churches are outward courts more than inward temples. And by reason of this their mixture, great corruptions and defects, both in the form of the temple, or church-fellowship, and impurities in the worship and about the altar, have been continued among them.

Now for the understanding of these allusions, we must know that there were belonging to the temple in Jerusalem—

1. The *holy of holies*, which was at one end enclosed and separated from the rest of the temple, after the manner of our cathedral quires.

2. The *body of the temple*, whereinto came the priests only; and in which stood the altar of incense, which was answerable to the body of our cathedral churches, compassed by the inner court: wherein—

3. There was a larger *outward court* encircling the whole temple, into which the people of all sorts, both men and women, did come. And this was answerable to the churchyards which go round about our churches.

Now this third and last court is that which is here said to be without; that is, without the compass of the temple. And it is called the 'great court' going round about the other, namely, encompassing the inward court of the priests, and the holy of holies; thus, 1 Kings vii. 12, it is expressly called. And it is by Ezekiel called the 'outward court' very often, in distinction from the inward court or temple where the altar was; which, in distinction from this, is also called the 'court of priests.' So 2 Chron. iv. 9, where it is said, Solomon 'made the court of the priests, and the great court,' namely, that into which the people came.

There was indeed a fourth court for strangers to come into, built by Herod. But that is not here alluded to, for the Scripture mentioneth it not. But the outward court here is that which Ezekiel, as I said before, does so often call by that name, in distinction from the court of priests: for to his measuring there, is the allusion of this measuring here; of which you may read, chap. xl. 17, 27. And the inner court is put for the temple, and the temple for it, as being all one.

Bring this then to the New Testament. The Scriptures and prophets, by the notion of a temple, do still express the true church, as 1 Cor. iii. 17, Eph. ii. 21, and many other places. And by priests, who only are to enter into the inner temple, they express true worshippers. You have both these expressions put together in 1 Pet. ii. 5, 'You, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.' And whereas the people entered not into the temple then, now all that are holy are bidden 'to draw near, having their bodies,' or whole man, 'washed with water,' as the priests were wont to be; even water of regeneration and sanctification, as Heb. x. 22.

Now, in distinction from these true worshippers, the carnal professors of religion, and crowd of unregenerate men, that join themselves to the church by professing the same religion and faith, though yet continuing in the natural uncircumcision of their hearts, are called the 'outward court' here, they having no right to approach this altar. And, by the law of distinction and opposition, if the true worshippers now under the gospel be typified out by the priests, who were in a peculiar manner holy unto God, and whose holiness typified forth inward holiness under the gospel, then carnal professors now, who are Jews outwardly only, are left typified out by that common crowd of Jews who came then into the outward court. And these may most truly be termed an outward court, in a comparison with this temple and true worshippers, be the notion of temple taken in what sense it may. For whether temple or church be taken for the mystical temple or church of the elect and sincere worshippers, these are without, (as the Apostle's phrase is, 2 Cor. v.,) in comparison to them, and are carnal worshippers, worshipping God in the letter, not in the spirit, with 'outward bodily exercise,' not 'in spirit and truth,' as 1 Tim. iv. 8; and they are such as to a stander-by, who hath skill to judge, are, for the generality, apparently such; even Jews outwardly only, not within, as Rom. ii. 28, 29.

Or if temple be taken for churches instituted, or congregations of true public worshippers, (as Eph. ii. 22, it is taken; as also Heb. x. 22, compared with ver. 25, where the assembling together to worship is called a 'drawing near,' &c.,) in that respect also these carnal men joined with them are but as the outward court laid to the temple, who join in the same service, but do 'draw near with their lips' only, and, as Isaiah speaks, chap. i., 'tread his courts with sacrifices abominable to God;' whilst the other, as a holy priesthood, are only within the temple, and do 'draw near with assur-

ance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled, and their bodies washed with water,' as the allusion to the priests' entering into the inner temple where the altar stood is, in Heb. x. 22.

So that, in what sense soever the Papists, whom some would have to be the outward court here meant, might be called the outward court, these also may. As whether because they arrogate to themselves the name of the church, and say, 'they are Jews, and are not, but do lie.'

In this respect may these also be called the outward court, who with impudence do arrogate to themselves the name of the church, and under that name do in some places cast out the true worshippers; and who, by reason of their multitude and number,—the best congregations of the first Reformation consisting of many more apparently bad than good, and many of those churches having none but men unregenerate,—are in view only or chiefly the church; whilst the true visible worshippers are a company of hidden ones in comparison: and therefore the outward court, in the type, was called the great court.

Yea, these unregenerate Protestants are much rather to be accounted the outward court, and so are mainly here intended; which will appear, if you put but two things together:—

First, Outward court here is oppositely put unto all these other particulars enumerated that were to be measured; both unto temple, altar, and worshippers therein; and so oppositely doth import, not merely an outward face and place of worship, but as withal including persons worshipping also, and so carnal worshippers, in full opposition to the other. For otherwise this expression answers not the type, namely, the outward court in the Jewish temple, in which were the multitude, as in the inner temple the priests. So that the outward court imports and includes a company or sort of worshippers, as well as it imports the outward visible face of the church; and that by a metonymy, the *continens* being put for the *contentum*, the thing *containing* for the thing *contained*: even as these phrases, *heaven* and *earth*, do often import, and are put for, all things therein contained. And so *outward court* here implies a sort of worshippers therein; and in that respect is opposed to, and distinguished from the temple, and the true worshippers therein. And indeed, churches, and the face thereof, in the notion of the New Testament, consisting not of material buildings, as Cameron well shews, it is the persons worshipping who have the name of churches: and so here, persons worshipping, distinct from the temple and true worshippers, must needs be meant, as those that do constitute and make up this outward court. So that, take persons away, and the face of an outward court ceaseth to be. Thus Cornelius à Lapide upon the place:—*In hac parte templi*, says he, *et in adorantibus sacerdotibus symbolicè significantur fideles, qui Antichristi tempore erunt optimi, religiosissimi, Deo conjunctissimi, et in cultu ejus solidissimi. Per atrium exterius intelligit Christianos infirmiores, et vitæ laxioris, ideoque a Deo remotiores. Hos (ait) ejice foras, id est, extra ecclesiam. Quasi dixisset, Rejice eos inter infideles et apostatas; quia hi cedunt gentibus et Antichristo affectis, et ideo indigni sunt qui inter fideles numerentur.*

Now then, *secondly*, add to this, that this outward court, thus consisting of a multitude of false worshippers, is here made distinct from the Gentiles: for this outward court, and the worshippers thereof, are 'given to the Gentiles;' and therefore are to be left out in the new measure taken.

Now a company of worshippers, who are distinct, both from the true worshippers of the temple, and from the Gentiles or Papists, must needs be the multitude of carnal Protestants that fill our churches, and make an out-

ward court, together with the temple. For if the Gentiles be this outward court themselves, then who are these Gentiles that are to tread it down?

Neither, *thirdly*, can it be thought that the Gentiles, possessing the outward face of the church, should so fill up this outward court here meant, as to be made, as they are here, the other sole contradistinct and opposite party to the temple and true worshippers. Unless we would say, that all Protestants are the inner temple, as well as the priests and true worshippers therein, and both to be here measured; and so the Papists and they share these two alone between them. But we assuredly knowing that of Protestants not one of a hundred are true worshippers, according to outward judgment, by those rules the reed warrants us to judge of others by, may as assuredly also conclude that this multitude of carnal professors are not here intended by the angel, as at all included in the temple, and among the true worshippers; especially seeing he puts the reed into John's hand, to measure none but such as are visibly true worshippers. And therefore they must necessarily make up that third party, distinct both from the temple-worshippers and from the Gentiles; and are they who are to be cast out by the one, and seized on by the other, as the outward court is here said to be. And more sure I am that, according to apostolical institution, such as they ought to be left out by those that build true churches, and churches to be measured anew without them. And therefore, if this measuring the temple fall under the times of this sixth trumpet, I cannot but imagine this new reformation begun, to be intended; and that re-entry the Gentiles are now a-making upon the outward court of our churches, and their yielding to them, to be the giving thereof unto these Gentiles here.

And, *fourthly*, the Papists cannot so well be meant here by the outward court, as some would have them. For I see not that the angel would vouchsafe them, in this his mention of them here through this type, so much as the bare name of the outward court unto his temple. That Romish church is not worthy in his esteem to be so accounted of in the proportions of this allusion. But he rather calls them Gentiles, as being idolatrous worshippers; and elsewhere, the 'synagogue of Satan,' 'worshippers of the beast and his image,' 'Sodom, Egypt,' &c., as being in a further distance and degree of comparison remote from the true temple here, and the worshippers therein. And so between the true worshippers in the inner temple, and these Gentiles, he placeth a third sort of worshippers, who are not Gentiles in their worship, but separate from them in it as well as the true Israelites; and who worship the true God after the manner of the worship of the temple outwardly; and yet are but 'outwardly Jews,' as Rom. ii. 28, and remain uncircumcised in heart and life. And these in this allusion doth God allow the place and name of the outward court; which till the reed, the light of the word, came, distinguishing true worshippers from them, were accounted as of the inner temple, but are now discovered to be without, as the word in the original is. So that the outward court doth typify out a company who in these times have a greater nearness to the true worshippers than the Gentiles have, and yet are but without. And though this outward court is here said to be 'given to the Gentiles,' yet, mark it, not to them as those who are reckoned the worshippers therein, not as the 'treaders of the outward court,'—as in Isa. i. the phrase is of God's house,—God reckoneth not them such; but as the 'treaders down' of this outward court, as they are said to do by the holy city in the next words, God bringing in upon these carnal professors, for their contempt of the gospel and of the true worshippers, the worst of the heathen upon them, to tread them down by violence, either of conquest over

their bodies, as in Germany, or over their consciences, in making them again to submit to their superstitions and idolatries, as they shall go on to do in other places.

And observe the glorious wisdom that is in God's proceeding herein, as the reason of it. For God intending to have a church most holy unto himself, under the seventh trumpet, in which 'the ark shall be seen,' which notes out the holy of holies, as it is ver. 19 of this 11th chapter,—and his manner being to carry on his church unto perfection by degrees,—he doth therefore, about the midst of that time, between the first reformation long since made and that seventh trumpet, in an age or so foregoing it, set his builders on work (whom John here represents) to endeavour to erect a new frame, and a reformation of that reformation; and to take the reed, and measure over anew both temple, altar, and worshippers, and to cast out that outward court of worshippers, with those corruptions of theirs which hindered that thorough reformation; and so to contract his temple into a narrower compass, as the proportion of the inner temple to the outward was, yet purer and more refined; he delighting more in truth, and purity of worship, than in magnitude or multitude of sacrifices and worshippers: and so to make to himself a church that shall consist of priests, and an inward temple separated from that outward court, into which the true worshippers are called up from the other, which before lay common to both. And how elegant is this allusion here, whereby he sets forth the several states and conditions of his church, growing up unto perfection!

The first reformation he sets out by an inner temple, more imperfect, unfurnished, and, besides, defiled by the adjoining of an outward court unto it.

The second reformation, more pure, he represents by the inner temple measured again, to be finished and cleansed from that mixture.

And then, in the last verse, he opens the holy of holies, into which no unclean thing shall enter, as it is chap. xxi. 27. For though their second reformation, and the reed thereof, keeps out men civil and profane, whom godly men, whom John here represents, may judge visibly so to be; yet many a hypocrite, that maketh a lie, may scape and crowd into this inward temple still, whilst the judgment of men, who often err, applies this reed. But into the other temple to come, under the New Jerusalem, shall none of these enter. There shall be a golden reed then, as chap. xxi. 15; whereas now there is but an ordinary cane, reed, or staff, which, though in itself it be straight, yet being to be applied by men, they may be deceived.

Now, having given this more general view what is meant by the temple and outward court, I will more particularly explain what it is to *measure* the temple, altar, and worshippers therein; and what it is to *leave out* this outward court.

1. To this end Christ 'puts a reed into John's hands,' who represents the builders of this age; that is, puts into their hearts and hands the word, and the light thereof, as alone a sufficient rule to square churches, both worshippers and worship, by. Other reeds men would have, but God hath given us rules in his word to square the whole frame and model of this temple by. And this is to be laid as a principle, that we admit of nothing in matters of the church which the word does not warrant. Which principle was never yet so fully taken up and practised by our reformers hitherto; though it hath long been contended for, as the fundamental groundwork of this building.

2. By *temple* here I understand not only the church of the elect,—for they

are all one and the same with them that worship God in spirit and truth; whereas here, in this enumeration, temple and worshippers therein seem to import distinct considerations at least;—but I rather understand churches or congregations of public worshippers considered as such; church-fellowship, as you call it; which, as well as the company of the elect, was typified out, and called the temple, as Eph. ii. 20–22. For the Apostle there having first said of the Ephesians, that as they were saints in common with others, so they were built up with all the elect into a temple unto God, and this ver. 20, 21, and so made part of *templum electorum;* he after that, says again of the same Ephesians, as they were a company knit in church-fellowship, that they were 'built together for a habitation to God,' ver. 22. And so the particular church at Ephesus made a temple and a habitation apart, and, as it were, a little sanctuary. Now every such particular church bears the name of the whole, and may also justly be called the temple; because in a church so gathered, the ordinances of church-communion and worship, as the sacraments, excommunication, &c., are to be administered, and not out of such a church-state, or such assemblings; as at the temple of Jerusalem only sacrifices were to be offered. And therefore—

3. By *altar* here, which was that main ordinance of temple-worship serving for sacrifice, which was nowhere out of it to be used, I understand church-ordinances of public worship and sacrifice. And—

4. By *worshippers*, I understand the persons who only are to be of this temple, and to approach to this altar; as only the priests then did into the inward temple, and unto the altar: even such only who are 'lively stones, built up in a spiritual house, and a holy priesthood, to offer up acceptable sacrifice unto God;' as it is in 1 Pet. ii. 5. So that, although *temple* here doth connotate and import worshippers,—for now, under the New Testament, temple and worshippers are materially the same, as by that place of Peter appears, though formally they may be considered as distinct, as here they seem to be,—and so *worshippers* importeth these persons considered in such meet qualifications as belong to them as saints, and are required in them to make them meet worshippers in this temple, which this reed lays forth; yet formally *temple* notes out these persons as to be gathered up in a church-assembly, according unto Christ's institution. Now then—

5. To *measure* all these with this reed implies a drawing of a true platform by the rules of the word; by shewing both—

(1.) What a true church or temple is, and how to be built; and what the power, the frame and constitution of it, &c. This is rightly and truly *measuring the temple.* And—

(2.) Laying out the right way of the administration of all church-worship and ordinances, as excommunication, sacraments, ordaining officers of holy things, who partake and 'serve at the altar,' and all this by the word. This is to *measure the altar.* In a word, all that which, Rom. xii. 1, the apostle calls λογικὴ λατρεία, word-service or worship; he speaking to the Romans in that chapter as they were a body of a church, as in the 13th chapter he speaks to them as members of a commonwealth.

(3.) *Measuring the worshippers* is, with the reed, laying forth who are true saints, and so are meet matter for and to be worshippers therein; and so judging of men by the rules of the word, and accordingly admitting into, or rejecting from this fellowship, and 'judging them when within,' as the apostle speaks.

1. And thus measuring is taken for drawing a platform of all these things. As appears by that measuring the temple by Ezekiel, unto which the angel

here alludes, Ezek. xliii. 10, 11, where it is called a 'shewing them the pattern, the form of the house, and fashion of it;' together with the 'goings out and comings in' for administration, &c.; all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms of those ordinances, and all the laws thereof. And as there Ezekiel sees distinctly, and apart measured the temple, chap. xli., xlii.; then the altar, chap. xliii. 13; and then concerning the worshippers the angel gives laws, chap. xliv., blaming them that they permitted 'strangers, men uncircumcised' in flesh and heart (speaking in the language of the type) to be in his sanctuary, ver. 7; giving a law, ver. 9, that none such should enter in; shewing whom he would have to be priests and Levites, and who not, and their duties, in the rest of that chapter: even so here John is bid to cast out the outward court, as being strangers unto God, and unclean, and using strange forms of worship. And—

2. *Measuring* is here also put to signify that such a temple, altar, and worshippers should now, in this age, begin to be built and erected, and men set on work to do it. So in Ezek. xliii. 10, 11, the measure is taken to that end, that Israel, seeing the true pattern, might be ashamed of their former aberrations, and for the time to come might keep to, and do according to, that pattern, and square all by it. Measuring here respects not the old temple so much, as if the temple that had hitherto stood were to be measured, but it respects a new building, or finishing of a church. So also Zech. ii., the measuring the city, ver. 2, was to signify not the taking the platform of Jerusalem as then it stood built, but as further anew to be built and inhabited, ver. 4, 5. So also the temple, as then being yet unfinished by the Jews after the captivity; the plummet, or measuring-line, chap. iv. 10, which answers to the reed here, signified that the temple should be finished; which appears, if you compare the above-named place with ver. 9 of the same chapter. And—

3. *Measuring* imports protection also. So, Zech. ii., the measuring the city there is in the interpretation given, ver. 5, explained, that 'God would be a wall of fire round about them, and their glory in the midst of them.' And so here so much may be intimated, and so hoped for. For the outward court is therefore not measured, because it is given to the Gentiles. But, on the contrary, the worshippers are measured, and called up, as it were, out from the outward court, that they may be preserved from the re-entry of those Gentiles upon them, or power over them; at least, from such power as they had over the outward court. To get into this temple is the greatest preservative to keep the saints from the over-growing corruptions and defilements of these Gentiles; and it may unto many prove a protection and sanctuary from their power, as to those churches in New England it may be hoped it shall. 'God will create a defence upon his glory.' And, however, they shall hereby be reserved for that resurrection which afterward is to come, ver. 11, 12, &c.

Now, in the second place, on the contrary, the not measuring and the leaving out the outward court, and yet measuring the other, is—

1. By the word exactly putting a difference between them that fear God and them that fear him not; measuring out who fear him by marks, signs, and spots upon his people, (as in Deuteronomy God speaks,) which the word gives. And this distinguishing and putting a difference between men and men, the word calls excluding or leaving them out. Which, accordingly, to make way for the right constitution of churches, in discerning the true matter of them, hath been the chief work of the godly ministers in England in this last age; who, though they wanted the ordinance of excommunication in

their churches, yet in lieu of it they had excommunicating gifts, and were forced, because of that profane mixture in churches, to spend most of their ministry in distinguishing men, by giving signs and marks of men's natural and regenerate estates, and convincing and discovering carnal men to themselves and others: which God in providence ordained, to make way for the erection of more pure churches. For by this light was set up in godly men's hearts a spirit to discern between the clean and the unclean; and so to hew and set apart the materials for this temple, as the stones for Solomon's were.

2. This implies a rejecting them from church-fellowship, and not admitting them into the new-reared temple, as being not fit matter for this building; which is a kind of excommunication of them.

3. This leaving out the outward court may also imply a rejecting such forms of administration in worship, (liturgies, &c.,) and corruptions therein, which are not found agreeable to the word. For I take the phrase of *outward court* to import a full opposition to those particulars mentioned in the former words; which, as you have heard, are these—temple, altar, worshippers. And therefore oppositely, all carnal and corrupt worshippers, or forms of worshipping, cleaving to ordinances, as left in the first reformation, as the filth which the sea leaves behind it at an ebb, these are all comprehended under that expression of outward court.

Now, in the last place, consider the reason given why God stirs up his people, now in this age, to do thus by this outward court. Which is, because, as their forms of worship came from Popery, and themselves are inwardly and in heart Gentiles; so he hath, for many glorious ends of his, ordained them unto Popery again, more or less to be subjected to it. And therefore he declares this as the reason why he would now, and not before, put it into the hearts of his builders thus strangely and suddenly to reject them: because that the time is now come when, by his decree, they must return to the Gentiles again. Only ere the Gentiles should thus again seize on them, they must first be left out by the templers, the true church; which, being once done, they forthwith become as heathens, as Christ says; and being 'cast out' they 'wither,' and become a prey to men, as it is John xv. 6. Popish opinions and practices take them again. And how, by degrees, do these Gentiles win ground upon the outward court in England? And how does their winning ground drive the true worshippers into the inner temple, and cause them to abandon their mixture with the outward court? So that as this new reformation made way for their ruining the outward court, so the Gentiles' winning more upon the outward court doth further this new reformation; God carrying on these two works at once.

Now the word *given*—'it is given to the Gentiles'—imports an easy kind of conquest which the Popish party obtains over them; they yield, and give up the fort as it were, and suffer the Papists to come in upon them, without much or long holding out. Now in such a dispensation of God towards the carnal Protestants, thus to give them up again unto the Gentiles, there are many and glorious ends which God may have in it, that may make it the more probable that so indeed he intends to do, ere he means to bring in that glorious church to come. As—

1. That he might have a purer church, according to the primitive institution; these treaders of his courts becoming loathsome to him, with their oblations. And though the first reformation was, outwardly in show, more specious and glorious, for the multitude of those that reformed, and this is to be by much a smaller and narrower building,—even as in proportion the outward court did far exceed the inner temple,—yet this consisting of purer

worshippers and worship, squared by the word, this second building shall in true glory excel that other.

2. God may do this to let many of these worshippers taste of the fruit of their own ways. They took upon them to be the true church-zealots and defenders of religion against the Papists, and yet cast out God's true worshippers and their ministers, saying, 'Let God be glorified;' whilst they beat their fellow-servants, as the parable hath it. But here they are met with being cast out by them again. And upon their being rejected from their fellowship, the protection and defence of these from the Gentiles cease, and they are given up to them.

3. For the same cause that God let Popery come in upon the world at first, for the same he suffers it thus again to overflow; even because men 'received not the truth'—so clearly shining in the prophecy of the witnesses amongst them—'in the love of it.'

4. To throw out this rubbish that would hinder that temple, which after all he intends to build and make most glorious. For these, like those Samaritans, Ezra iv. 1, 2, offer indeed to build with them; but being, according to God's appointment, not to have a hand in it, they would be a hindrance to it; as indeed they have been.

5. That of that glorious restauration, and resurrection of the church and witnesses, which is yet to come, and is foretold in the 12th and 13th verses of this chapter, only true worshippers, who in this time of trial stood out as faithful witnesses against Popery, and the invasion of it, might have the honour and praise. Therefore God brings this trial upon all the churches, so to burn up and consume this dross, and to discover those carnal Protestants—that have spoken as big words and talked as hotly against Popery as any, and made that the evidence of their sincerity—to be such, and unsound, by a base yielding unto the Gentiles the Papists: that so, when Christ seems to revive his church again after this, ver. 13, then, as you have it in Isa. lxvi., Christ may appear to his people's glory, but to their shame who yet before cast them out, and said, 'Let God be glorified.'

6. That the Gentiles and the Pope might thus accomplish their time and period of forty-two months, with an investment of the Pope into his old territories, now towards the expiring of that his time. Which reason the next words do give, 'And so they shall tread down the holy city for forty-two months,' and be found domineering in it, in a manner, as fully as before, towards the end of their forty-two months; that so their lease may well-nigh expire in a full possession: and that so the confusion of Antichrist—the greatest work to be done for the church from the apostles' days—may be the more glorious unto God. Thus Daniel seemed to foretell, that after those 'tidings out of the north should trouble him,' which was this separation of these northern kingdoms from him; as also 'out of the east,' through the prevailing of the Turk, when he came so near unto his territories; that, enraged with this, he shall 'go forth in great fury,' chap. xi. 44, 'and plant his tabernacle' (his power and jurisdiction) again 'upon the glorious holy mountain,' (where the temple stands,) 'between the seas.' And what follows? Even that after all this his recovery of power over these churches of the Reformation towards his end, yet 'he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.' And after Rome's recovery of her power thus, and when the whore begins to sing her sister Babel's song, just before her fall,—as Rev. xvii. 7, 8,—and saith in her heart, 'I sit as a queen, and am no widow,' as having her ancient paramours again, and so thinks she shall now see no sorrow; therefore 'shall her plagues come in one day; for strong is the Lord

that judgeth her.' And thereby will be seen God's omnipotent power in her confusion. There is nothing also in it, that, chap. xvii., the ten kings or states of Europe are twice mentioned as giving their power unto the beast; and, ver. 17, are the second time said to agree to do it, through some special hand of God to fulfil his will: even till those words of God, uttered by Daniel in the fore-cited place, shall be fulfilled; for unto some word of the Old Testament do these words here refer.

§ 4.—*An appendix to the 1st and 2d verses of the 11th chapter, refuting other interpretations given of the measuring of the temple and outward court, (which you may read, or not read, as you please).*

This interpretation of John's measuring the temple, as in this latter age to be performed, being thus made forth to hold in all things, as you have seen, I shall not need to spend much time, and yet some, in refuting other interpretations.

Mr Mede would have the new book-prophecy to begin here at this 11th chapter, and the sixth trumpet under the seal-prophecy, fully ended before, at the conclusion of the 9th chapter; and the oath of the angel, chap. x., to supply the seventh trumpet. And so makes the angel here, in chap. xi., to begin again anew, aloft from John's time; and so this 11th chapter to be a short, compendious representation of the story of the church in all ages, beginning here anew from John's time, and, as it were, the contents and brief sum of that larger story which begins at chap. xii. And so would have all the several states of the church in all ages more briefly here represented through all times. As—

1. That of the primitive times, until Antichrist's rising, under the type of the temple measured; till when, says he, the church remained pure, according to the pattern: and therefore John is bidden to measure it, as a pattern of the truth unto after-ages. And then—

2. The face of the church during Antichrist's time, for 1260 years, under the type of the 'Gentiles treading down the outward court and holy city:' thereby, says he, representing how the Papists should arrogate and possess the name and face of the church so long time; which yet, because it will not bear the measure of the reed, John is therefore bidden to leave out, as neither in doctrine nor discipline keeping to the word, nor unto the primitive pattern, but utterly swerving from it, as the church of Rome hath done. And in this state the church continues for 1260 years; the Gentiles having that time allowed them to tread down the holy city. And the state of the true church all that while is but as of these witnesses in sackcloth. This interpretation the reverence had to the integrity of the church for the first 400 years did beget; together with that appearance, at first view, that the outward court should here be said to be given to the Gentiles, to be by them trodden down, as the holy city is, for forty-two months. Which mistake I have abundantly removed in the first section, and in the fifth general premise to this my interpretation.

But further to remove the supposition on which this interpretation of his is founded:—

1. The sixth trumpet, and the times of it in this vision, are not yet ended here in this angel's intention. For the angel, after his long discourse of the occurrences that are to fall under the times of the sixth trumpet, doth then (when the time of it, according to the series of this vision, did indeed come to end) say, ver. 14 of this chapter, 'The second woe is past, and the third cometh quickly.' And you may observe, that after the expiration of the

time of these woe-woe-trumpets, which are the fifth, sixth, and seventh, such a closure comes in after each of them, 'One woe is past, another comes,' &c. And thus, after that the times of the fifth trumpet were out, according to the series of the vision, this closure is added, chap. ix. 12, 'One woe is past, and behold there come two other woes more.'

Now at the end of the 9th chapter, there is no such close annexed. But here, chap. xi. 14, when the angel had related the occurrences which are to fall out in the latter days of the sixth trumpet,—that is, whilst the Turkish kingdom yet stands, and which shall fall out not long before his fall,—then, and not before, he brings in that close of the times of that trumpet, 'The second woe is past, and behold the third cometh quickly.' Which shews, that either part of the matter and of the woe that goes to make up that sixth trumpet complete, remained to be uttered by this angel, chap. xi., (which when he had declared, he says, 'The second woe is past,') or that, according to the course of the vision, the time of it was now expired. And then—

2. The angel takes his oath, chap. x., as yet standing under the times of the sixth trumpet, and afore* the times of the seventh; and that seventh trumpet's time yet not come to blow, according to the order of time presented in this vision. And therefore it is not a mere suspension of the vision itself until he had begun with or run over all times again, as Mr Mede would have it; but its time to blow was in this vision not yet come. This the very words and phrase of the angel's oath, chap. x., do imply; when he says, 'In the days of the seventh trumpet, when he shall begin to sound.' Mark that phrase, *the days of the seventh trumpet.* It implies that he speaks according to the compute of vision-time, as I may so call it; for vision being a representation of events, even as a comedy is of stories, accordingly these visions that succeed each other have a supposed artificial time that runs along with the representation of those events in these visions, in their due order,—even as the several seasons of the year are in a prognostication laid forth according to artificial names, (as in an almanac you read of dog-days and the like,) or even as in a map all countries are represented, with their several climates or situations, by lines of longitude and latitude, which have artificial names by geographers given unto them. So from the 6th chapter of this book, hath been represented a map or vision of all times, and these as successively governed by angels, from whence they have their names, as seasons have from their planets that govern them, (as the dog-days in summer, from the dog-star's reign at that time.) So the days of Christ's kingdom to come are called 'the days of the seventh angel;' and so the times before it are called the days of the sixth angel, or the sixth trumpet, under which the Turk reigns. Now then, in that the angel swears, 'time shall be no longer but till the days of the seventh angel;' when he begins to sound, all shall be finished; it implies, that according to the course of time in this vision begun, this time was not yet ended.

To demonstrate this, consider—

1. That those words, 'Time shall be no longer but till the days of the seventh angel,' do imply a long series of time already past in the visions of the former angels, and time hitherto brought down; and so he must needs speak this in a respect to vision or representative time, as I may so call it, which he, as an actor coming in his due place and order, stood under. And accordingly, likewise he must be supposed to speak unto John as a spectator brought to the last stadium or scene of time. And therefore he speaks as

* In the original edition it is *after*, which I have ventured to alter to *afore*.—ED.

taking it for granted that there was some time yet left, according to the series of this vision; and yet no more but until the days of the seventh trumpet, which was next to come upon the stage. And so the angel must be supposed to speak those words as yet standing under the days of the sixth trumpet, as yet not ended, but as having some time still to come. For should he be supposed to begin again aloft at the top of time, and so to bring John thither, as having ended the former prophecy; and then, with a new vision, to begin to run over all time again; he should, in the same speech, take in two several accounts of time at once. For whilst he says, 'time' (or delay) 'shall be no longer,' (which imports that whole space of time under the former trumpets, from the age wherein John lived, to be past and off the stage already,) in respect thereto he must be supposed then to stand under the sixth trumpet, as viewing all that time gone over. But in the following words, when he says, 'but in the days of the seventh trumpet, when he shall begin to blow,' he should speak as taking all time afore him new, and as beginning all time again, according to this opinion. And it were strange if in the same sentence two speeches should bear such differing dates.

2. Those words, 'But in the days of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound,' do also argue this. For—

(1.) He says not to John, The vision of that angel, and his sounding, I will not give thee now, John, which yet should now in order follow; but he says, The days of his sounding (as speaking of vision-time) are yet to begin. 'When the angel,' says he, 'shall begin to sound;' as manifestly noting the time of sounding, according to the order of representative time in the vision, not yet to be actually come to be presented; and not the vision only suspended unto John. And—

(2.) When he said, chap. xi. 14, that 'the second woe is past,' he adds, 'Behold, the third woe cometh quickly;' as noting yet some space of time between this and the seventh trumpet to come, as between the sixth vial and the seventh there is to be. So that the vision is not suspended only; but really, according to the series of this prophecy, it still went on, and this seventh was to follow. And—

(3.) Accordingly, when in the 11th chapter the seventh trumpet doth indeed sound, there is a voice heard—in answer, as it were, unto what the angel had said, chap. x., that 'delay should be no longer'—that 'now that time is come,' &c. He had said it should be no longer than till then; and now, when it sounds, the voice says, that 'time is come.' So that then, and not till then, according to the series of this vision, was the time of the sounding of it. And all this argues the vision of this 11th chapter, and the occurrences of it, to be a supplement or addition to come in towards the end of the sixth trumpet, and not to begin again at the top of time. So that rather, I take it, he still speaks all in this 11th chapter, as standing in the last days of the sixth trumpet, the times whereof are not ended; and so mentions such occurrences as shall fall out in the latter times of it, in which John and he do stand, as hath been shewn. And—

Secondly, for that other thing supposed,—namely, Mr Mede's making the first four hundred years until Antichrist's rising to be the temple measured, as so long agreeing with the reed, and so continuing as an exact pattern for churches, and so intended in this measuring,—I say two things:—

1. If the meaning should be that these primitive churches are therefore measured, that they might be held forth as a pattern to churches afterwards, as is intimated in his quoting Ezek. xliii. 10, 11, and applying it to this

measuring in such a sense only, I cannot imagine, that although a just and a due reverence is to be given to those times, that yet Christ would ever impart such an honour to any church not purely apostolical, as to make them the pattern for worship and doctrine, which is honour due only to the word, and unto those churches extant in the very times of the apostles, only so far as they kept those ordinances in which the apostles settled them; as 1 Cor. xi. 2, 22. Otherwise the apostle pulls down the pride of that Corinthian, and of all other churches, for arrogating this unto themselves, saying, 'What! came the word of God out from you, or to you only?' chap. xiv. of that epistle, ver. 36. It is therefore too much to give to those primitive times, especially for the first 400 years. For—

2. Although the doctrine and discipline of the first age in which John lived, and in which churches were then settled by the apostles, might then be thus measured to be held forth, and so to serve for a pattern, as we have the story of it in the word, which on purpose relates the state of those churches, yet to make such an integrity to extend to those other following ages, until the very times wherein Antichrist rose,—which in many matters both of worship and government did so much swerve one age after another still more and more from the rule,—this were unsafe. For the corruptions which still did steal in upon the doctrine and worship, in the first 300 years after the apostles' deaths, were indeed the occasion of the rise of Antichrist, the mystery of whose iniquity began to work in the apostles' times, and in every age more than other so prevailed, as that Antichrist arose in the view of the best churches and fathers, though then undiscerned by them; which, had they kept that primitive integrity, had been utterly impossible. And therefore to reduce our worship, &c., now unto the pattern of the first four or five hundred years, which is the plausible pretence of our new deformers, is to bring Popery again in by the same degrees now as it at first crept in by. And this the devil, who knew the way of introducing it then, to that end crieth it up now.

For my part, I rest assured that the light which hath broken forth in many of our reformed churches since Calvin's time, and which still increaseth, and shall until Antichrist be consumed, is both in matter of doctrine, interpretation of Scriptures, worship, church government, &c., much purer, and might be taken for a truer measure, than what shines in the story and writings of those three latter primitive ages. But yet it were too much to attribute that to it which this opinion puts upon the light of those primitive times. But all that I have said in my foregone exposition is, that now in this age, light coming in, and discovering how far the constitution of churches in their outward government, &c., hath swerved from the true pattern, therefore John is set at work afresh to measure it. Which use of the phrase is very proper, as implying only a reformation and restitution of the church attempted, after a swerving from the rule. In which sense Beza and other interpreters understand it, without any arrogation to these times. And—

3. For his making the outward court to represent the church's state as in order of time succeeding this temple of the primitive times, I only say this, that it seems to me that these two, the temple and the outward court, are represented as rather existing together and contemporaneous, the one being bid to be measured, and the other to be cast out, at one and the same time, as being not capable of the true measure. And the contrary opinion would make no churches erected according to the pattern in this Reformation, since Luther and Calvin, but still to remain, as it were, hidden under Popery as

an outward court until Antichrist's times are fully out. Whereas churches are, and have been, long since erected, and that as exactly according to the pattern as any we read of, the apostles' age only excepted. And then—

4. For that other supposition, that the 11th chapter should be a compendium of all times from John's age unto the seventh trumpet, so to shew the synchronising of two prophecies, I say—

(1.) It were strange that in a compendium one particular passage (of the killing of the witnesses) should be insisted upon more largely than all the rest, and take up the half of that discourse, as from ver. 7 to 14 this does; and that such a passage or occurrence as this, that is not mentioned in the large prophecy that follows, whereof this should be the compendium and argument, should yet come in here by itself; would it not rather argue that the angel here did chiefly intend to give some special occurrence, which should go before the seventh trumpet in the church of the age that preceded it, as a sign of its approach?

(2.) It is true, indeed, that one end of this angel's coming down was to shew what was the time and period of the fourth monarchy, under that last head the Pope, whose time and continuance Daniel had mentioned but indefinitely. But yet his purpose was to make mention, and but a mention, of no more times than simply those 1260 years of the last head, which were enough to interpret Daniel, which was his scope, and not explicitly to ascend to the whole time of the Revelation. And then his annexing to that computation such occurrences belonging to the book-prophecy as should fall out at the ending of that time, and his subjoining the expiring of the sixth trumpet, which belongs to the seal-prophecy, it being the passing away of the second woe, ver. 14, presently upon the ending of these occurrences; this serveth sufficiently enough to shew the connexion of all times in both prophecies, and more clearly than that other way of Mr Mede's.

There is but one objection, both against this way of mine, and that makes most for that opinion of his, that I know of; and that is, that, chap. x., John eating a little book which contains a new prophecy, and therefore, ver. 12, he says he must prophecy again; hence, therefore, it follows that the seal-prophecy must be supposed ended, and so this 11th chapter to contain a new prophecy from the beginning.

To which I answer, that the angel's coming down now towards the end of the old prophecy had a double scope; the one to give a new prophecy, the other to give an exact computation of the times of both prophecies, himself as yet standing in the end of those times of the one prophecy, and being shortly to enter into the other; and so withal intending to give a signal of the ending of those times for the church's warning. Which occurrences that were to be the signs, because they were passages belonging to the book-prophecy, as being the fates of the reformed churches in the days before the Pope's ruin, which are matters belonging to the book-prophecy; hence it is necessary that John should now first eat that little book, the story of which was entirely to begin at the 12th chapter, that so thereby he might be, as it were, enabled to conceive of these passages related, chap. xi., they being such as belonged to that book-prophecy. For John had not yet seen the beast ascending out of the bottomless pit, who is mentioned, ver. 7, nor heard of the witnesses and their vials; but by eating that little book now was signified to him that therein was contained the vision of these things which these passages here related did concern. And besides this, there was likewise signified unto him thereby, that now in the last days of the sixth trumpet the book was open, as Daniel says.

But for a more full answer to be added to these, take in that fifth precognition, or premised consideration, which in the beginning of this exposition of chap. xi. I laid down beforehand, tending to the opening of it.

I might do the like by the interpretations of Mr Brightman and Mr Forbes; who, though they make the measuring to signify and represent the godly's discerning the difference between the *temple*, the true church, and the *outward court*, the Popish and false church, in these latter days of the first Reformation; yet so as they make the outward court here to be the outward face of the Popish church, the seat and name of which they possessed, and the temple to be the church of God in all ages hid under Popery, as the temple was, within the outward court, and for many ages not discerned; whilst the Popish church, possessing the outward court, stood only outward to the eye, and held the name and face of the church, but became now to be discerned or measured by the reed of the word; which is, say they, the measuring here. So that they make the church, in these anterior times under Popery, to be the temple, and the outward face of the church all that while to be the outward court. And having placed this temple and outward court in the first days of Antichrist, and this measuring of the temple thus high, even from the dawning of the gospel so long since, they accordingly go on to make the following occurrences of this chapter to be all already fulfilled.

The 1260 days of the witnesses,—which they would have to be the two testaments,—their 'prophecy in sackcloth,' they make to be expired, and their slaughter past, in that council of Trent, coincident with the Smalkaldic war in 1547, or thereabouts. After which there was in Germany a restoration of the gospel, after 'three years and a-half;' where the 'tenth part of the city' fell off again from Popery. After which the seventh trumpet sounded, say they, when these northern kingdoms settledly embraced the gospel, and became the kingdoms of Jesus Christ; where, that he may for ever reign, without any recovery again by the beast, I say Amen, as Jeremiah did.

But this interpretation I cannot assent to; for, as we shall see afterward, this killing the witnesses, and the passing away of the second woe, or the Turkish dominion, together with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, are all yet to come.

And for their making the temple measured to be the company of elect past through all the ages until then, but now in the beginning of the gospel discovered, these things are against it:—

1. The visions of this book are still of things present or to come, and not of things past. And therefore this seems much rather to note out the present state of the temple, existing as then unto John, under some of the times of the sixth trumpet, than a discerning what was past and gone before that time.

2. The condition of the true worshippers, whilst hidden in those anterior times of Popery until the Reformation, are rather represented in chap xiv.—which chapter summarily contains the several faces and conditions of the church through Antichrist's reign, as the 13th chapter doth the state of Antichrist during that time—to be as a company of a hundred and forty-four thousand upon Mount Zion, whereon as yet a temple was not built: and so distinguished from them under the times of the Reformation, when only we come to have the first mention of the temple, ver. 15, 17, and of the altar, ver. 18; therein alluding, as it seems to me, unto the state of the holy city, wherein, until Solomon's time, there was not a temple built, though in

David's time that mount was by the Jews inhabited. So nor was this virgin company as yet formed up into a distinct temple and altar of worship distinct from the Popish, in any eminent manner, but rather lay scattered in the Popish churches, and were hidden among them, although they were not of them. But now, in the Reformation, they began to be built up into a temple apart, and to set up an altar distinct from that of these Samaritans. And then—

3. To make the measuring this temple to be an after-sight, or discerning of them, does not enough fill up the meaning of that phrase, though that be connotated and implied in it; which we find elsewhere used, as Ezek. xliii. 11, for drawing a platform of God's house, and the ordinances thereof, to keep them, and put them in practice; or else for building and finishing an edifice, as Zech. ii. 2, 4, compared, and Zech. iv. 9, 10. Which must therefore rather respect a temple as in these times existing and in being, or to be built and finished, than a temple in ages past, and but now discovered. And—

4. These opposite negative words, 'Measure not, but leave out the outward court,' do import a real act of rejection put in execution, and, in fact, done towards that outward court as then existing, and not merely a discovery or judging them only to have been but an outward court in ages past. They do imply an act of leaving them out in that building that was now erecting, as being such whose form and frame was not for this building, nor capable of that measure which was now to be applied.

All these things argue to me, that this vision and work appointed John here respected not anterior times, but the face of that church the times whereof he then stood in, and the work of that age about it. Whereas, according to their interpretation, the outward court must have existed at the beginning of the times of Antichrist; for they suppose the outward court—that is, the face of the church—possessed by Antichrist forty-two months, even from the beginning.

There is a third interpretation, which to me seems more probable than either of these, and which I exclude not in this of mine; and that is, that this measuring the temple, &c., should be that first reformation and erecting of churches, with that separation made from Popery by our worthies, they casting out that catholic Romish church as not agreeing with the rule. And so that reformation and separation falling out together with, or not long after, the Turks' possessing the eastern empire, which is the sixth trumpet, chap. ix., this 11th chapter, beginning with that reformation of the church, should thereby orderly continue the story of the sixth trumpet, without any *chasma* or void space of time between the 9th and 11th chapters. Whereas, to draw it down to our time, leaves an interim or vacuity of a hundred years. But—

1. I conceive the scope of the angel here not to be so much to make up a complete story continued to the other, chap. ix. For the former story of the trumpets having contained only the fates of the empire, it therefore suited not his scope to annex this reformation of the church thereunto, as any homogeneal part of one continued story, although in time immediately succeeding it. For that more properly belonged to the book-prophecy that follows, and is at large set forth, chap. xiv.–xvi. But his scope seems rather to be to give a computation of the times of Antichrist, and a signal of their ending, by the occurrences of the age just before, singling out to that end such particular passages, that otherwise belonged to the book-prophecy, about the church in that last age as should be most eminent, and likewise designatory

of the ending of those times, being such also as should fall out before the expiring of the sixth trumpet or second woe.

And if these occurrences have any affinity with the sixth trumpet, it rather lies in this, that whereas the fifth and sixth trumpets had contained two woes on the Christian world in the east, for their idolatry, from the Turks and Saracens, this contains a like woe on the churches of the reformation in the west, by the Papists overrunning their outward court, as a punishment of their carnal gospelling. Which, added to those woes brought upon those Grecian churches by the Turks, should make the woe of the sixth trumpet complete. And so the treading the wine-press without the city, (in Germany,) chap. xiv., should be reduced to the sixth trumpet, as a part of it, rather than to any of the vials. The vials being upon the Turk and Pope only, but these other woes upon those other professors of Christ and his name, after a fleshly way, both Grecians and Protestants; the one by the Turk, chap. ix., the other by the Papists here in this 11th chapter. And then—

2. The main eminent business of the first reformers from Popery being chiefly about matters of doctrine corrupted by the Papists, and about the idolatries of Rome, therefore both in chap. xiv., in the voices of those three angels, and in chap. xv., in their song there, matters of doctrine only are mentioned. And though they laid the foundation of the building of all churches, yet that was not τὸ ἐργὸν, that very work unto which they did so specially attend. It was not so much the right measuring and constitution of churches, and of the materials of them; as here that is made the main thing intended, even to measure the temple, altar, &c., and indeed is, and hath been eminently and peculiarly the work in hand now in this last age.

3. Let it be considered that the Popish party in this allusion cannot so properly be called the outward court, but they are rather intended by Gentiles here; and so the outward court must note out that third sort of worshippers between these Gentiles and the templers, as I before shewed. And—

4. This being that exceeding great error and defect laid in the foundation of the churches of the first Reformation, especially in our British churches,—namely, the adjoining this outward court of carnal and unregenerate Protestants, and receiving them from the first into the temple, worship, and communion of all ordinances; so that the bounds of the church were extended as far as the bounds of the commonwealth; which was done out of human prudence, suddenly to greaten the party against the Gentiles in the city: that as the earth helps the woman, chap. xii., so this, as an outward court, might round about shield the true temple and worshippers in it against the beast. And then, on the other side, this being, in this new-begun and second reformation of these churches, the main fundamental principle which is here mentioned, of receiving none into churches but only such worshippers as the reed, or light of the word, so far as it gives rules to judge others by, applied by the judgment of men, who yet may err, shall discover to be truly saints, (which belongs to another dispute;) and this vision falling out in, and as belonging to, the times of this latter age, and being purposely intended, as it were, to amend and correct that very error: hence it seems most properly to belong to this work of a second reformation.

Yet, because that was a true measuring, and this but the finishing of that building whereof their hands had laid the foundation, and like Zerubbabel's finishing the temple; therefore I verily think the Holy Ghost had an aim at both, as unto two several gradual accomplishments of it. For this I per-

ceive in almost all prophecies: that there are several accomplishments which the Holy Ghost hath in his eye, yet so as he fixeth upon one, and usually the last of them, as the main intended. For which I could bring many instances; of which one I shall hereafter give. And that he might have such a double aspect in this, I shall shew when I come to the killing of the witnesses.

CHAPTER V.

The exposition of the 11th chapter continued.—The description of the witnesses, ver. 3–6.

SECTION I.

Some things in general premised.—The division of the particular acts ascribed to them: with the order and time of each.

Now I come to the angel's discourse concerning the 'two witnesses;' who are the holy people, whose power is at last to be scattered. The description of whom is set down, to make way for the relation of that their scattering.

Two things, as was said, are here related about them:—

1. The description of their condition and of their power, ver. 3–6.

2. The last scattering of them, and of this their power.

I. For their description, which the angel makes, to the end that John might know whom he spake of, who were at last to be thus killed; he describes them as throughout all ages they had opposed Antichrist: which he doth upon that occasion that he had for to mention their whole time. But especially he sets them out by what in their latter times, the age immediately foregoing this their killing, they should have power to oppose the beast in; and yet, how that after all he should prevail against them. So that there is this use and end of this so large a description of them, ver. 3–6, that the time of this their last killing might be more evidently discerned, when it was to come; namely, after they should have done thus and thus against the beast and his company,—to wit, set up a temple, and poured out four vials,—and when they should be come to one of the highest plagues, even 'to devour them with fire,' which is the fourth vial, that then their enemies should prevail against them.

Now this description of them is absolved many and several ways: as—

1. By their *office;* they are *witnesses* and *prophets.*

(1.) *Witnesses,* as being in all ages to testify against Antichrist; but especially now at last.

(2.) *Prophets,* as being to prophesy, and thereby to feed the church, whilst in the wilderness, the same term of 1260 years; as you have it chap. xii. 6, where it is said that 'they'—that is, these prophets and witnesses—'shall feed her,' &c.

2. They are set out by their *condition,* which is in sackcloth and mourning; whilst the Pope and his clergy are in their silk triumphing.

3. By their *number;* they are two. For—

(1.) *By the mouth of two witnesses* (at least) *every word is to be established.* And—

(2.) They are two, in allusion to those famous pairs or couples, for by couples they have still gone, in the Old Testament, living in the like times;

and which were fit types of these times of Antichrist, and the church's state therein, in the various progress of it throughout all ages of Antichrist's reign.

The couples were these:—

1. Moses and Aaron, prophets to the church in Egypt, and in the wilderness.

2. Elias and Elisha, prophets to Israel in Ahab's time, wherein idolatry prevailed, and no face of a church was seen, and but seven thousand hid in corners that were godly.

3. Zerubbabel and Joshua, prophets in the days of the finishing the temple, after the people were come forth from Babylon's captivity.

And that to these three pairs the allusion is here made, is manifest.

1. To Moses and Aaron: for—

(1.) These execute Egypt's plagues, ver. 6, like as they did.

(2.) They 'devour men with fire,' ver. 5; as Moses did twice by his gainsayers in the wilderness.

2. To Elias and Elisha; for as they shut up heaven, that it rained not, so these here do the like, ver. 6.

3. To Joshua and Zerubbabel; for therefore, in ver. 4, these are called the 'two olive-trees,' and 'candlesticks,' that began and finished the temple after the captivity.

Now, out of this allusion made to such persons, you may in the general observe, that they are eminent both as ministers and magistrates, for such were all these types in their times, who especially are here intended, under the notion of two witnesses. And thus we have had the description of their quality, office, condition, and number.

Then further, they are set forth to us by their several exploits, which they are to perform and execute during the whole time of their prophecy. And these are particularly related in each verse following. Which before I explain particularly, let me premise this in the general to your notice about them: That the angel doth enumerate them, and order his recital of them, so as to draw our eyes unto two of these exploits or facts especially, as being the more eminent, and as those which were nearest to the times of this last age, wherein John measured the temple. And these are—

1. Their *devouring their enemies with fire*, which is mentioned, ver. 5. And—

2. Their being *two olive-trees*, &c., ver. 4.

Which two are first mentioned, and set in the first view, as being such as did set forth these witnesses according to what they should be in this latter age. And to confirm this, you may observe—

1. That those words in the 5th verse, 'If any man hurt them, fire comes out of their mouths,' &c., have indeed a direct reference to those words, ver. 3, 'And I will give to my two witnesses,' &c.; so that it is as if he had said, 'I will give to my two witnesses power, that if any man hurt them, fire shall come out of their mouths,' &c. And the particle *καὶ—and* I will give, &c.—is there, ver. 3, adversatively put for *but;* as noting out that special opposition that these witnesses should have power to make against the Gentiles that should enter upon their outward court. 'But,' says he, 'I will give to my two witnesses power, that if any man hurt them,' &c. To this I say, do these words, 'and I will give,' ver. 3, refer, as well as to those other words, 'they shall prophesy,' &c., which follow in the 3d verse, as Piscator also observes. That whereas he had said three things in the 1st and 2d verses: as—

(1.) That the temple was to be measured and finished in this latter age, by the godly in it, whose person John sustains;

(2.) That their outward court, which fenced the temple and witnesses, was to be regained by the Papists, and trodden down; and—

(3.) That the Gentiles' whole time of reigning, upon this occasion mentioned, was to expire:—

Answerably and oppositely, as καὶ is taken, he says three things of these witnesses: as—

(1.) That the same space of time that the Gentiles are to have to reign in, the same these have, even as many, to prophesy in, and shall be enabled to oppose them all that while. The witnesses are to have their twelve hundred and sixty days, for the Gentiles' forty-two months; so ver. 3. And—

(2.) Whereas this temple was in his latter age to be begun to be measured, but that work is interrupted and hindered by this assault and invasion made by these Gentiles upon this outward court and temple; yet these witnesses shall be as those 'two olive-trees,' ver. 4, 'that minister before the Lord of the whole earth,' whose power is engaged in that work. And thus they are called, to signify that as Joshua and Zerubbabel then,—who were called two olive-trees in that vision, Zech. iv., in respect that they were to perform the like work of finishing the temple, against all opposition made,—so should these two witnesses now complete the finishing of this temple measured, notwithstanding this interruption by the Gentiles' invasion of the temple and outward court. And so this is oppositely spoken to that second thing said of the Gentiles. And—

(3.) Although these Gentiles in their subduing the outward court do much hurt to the witnesses, who shall oppose them in this their assault upon it and the temple, yet they again shall be able to avenge all the hurt done to themselves, by fire returned upon their enemies, and spit out of their mouths against them, whilst they are thus endeavouring to regain the outward court from them. And this is the first thing in general to be observed. Now—

2. To the same purpose you may observe, that this power given them to hurt their enemies is spoken of as a matter of fact, done at that present time, and in the age wherein John in the vision stands, bearing the persons of the godly who were to measure this temple. Yea, and that this is spoken of as an encouragement to that work, that 'if any man will hurt them, fire comes out of their mouths.' But now—

3. On the other side, it may be observed, that whatever else is said of their power in the 6th verse, besides these two things in the 4th and 5th verses, is brought in merely as a thing added for illustration's sake, to shew what power besides this they have in their days formerly exercised. As thus, 'These have power in the days of their prophecy,' &c., ver. 6. But the prime and eminent thing which is first mentioned is that their devouring their enemies with fire; which is plainly the fourth vial, mentioned next the measuring the temple, as conjunct with it. And again—

4. This exploit of theirs hath an emphasis set upon it also, ver. 5, 'In this manner he,' speaking of him that shall hurt them, 'must be killed,' as noting the greatest plague which these witnesses could execute, and that which so vexeth and tormenteth their enemies, as ver. 10 hath it, and so scorcheth them, as the fourth vial expresseth it, that they are thereby provoked to kill them for it, and so to rejoice over them chiefly in this very respect, as ver. 10 tells us. Yea—

5. These four plagues being plainly the four first vials, you may observe,

that they are here mentioned *ordine inverso*, in a clean contrary order from what they are ranked in, chap. xvi. For the fourth vial of fire, which in chap. xvi. is made last in execution, is yet here ranked first; and that vial on the earth which is first there, is mentioned last here; merely to shew that this of fire was that which belonged to the present times of this chapter, and the visions of it, namely, when the temple is measured, and also as that which was mainly intended,—and the other to come in only for illustration's sake, to shew more fully who these witnesses were, even the same that the pourers forth of those vials.

SECTION II.

The acts of the witnesses: first, in the darkest times of Popery, withholding the rain, what?—next, in the times of separation from Popery, in the three first vials, ver. 6.

This being premised, to the end that you might know what times to refer these unto, I come now particularly to explain these several exploits here against their enemies, and that great service they do for God all this long time of their prophecy. Which serviceable acts of theirs have a double aspect:—

1. Towards their enemies.

2. Towards the temple, the church of God.

Or they may be divided, according to the several times in which these services were performed. As—

1. What in this last age they were to do before their killing, and now when the temple is measured, and the outward court to be trodden down; and this in the 4th and 5th verses. And—

2. What in the former ages of their prophecy they had also done; which is laid down ver. 6.

And this division you will here see to fall in according to that division which I made of these times, chap. xiv., and in the vials.

For the *first*, what they did to their enemies. And—

1. What they did against them in the days foregoing this latter age, wherein John is supposed to stand. Which acts of theirs are set forth in the sixth verse.

(1.) And those were either done in those first times of all, even in the darkest times of Popery, when the hundred and forty-four thousand stood on Mount Zion without a temple, and when idolatry overspread the world, chap. xiv. 1–6. Then these witnesses did 'shut heaven, that it rained not;' which in the allusion refers to the times of Ahab, as the fittest type of these first times. For that exploit carries us unto what Elias then in like manner did, when he brought that curse on the land for their idolatry, that it rained not. When also the church was so small, that Elias thought himself alone; and when Ahab and his priests of Baal—that is, the Pope and his mass-priests—ruled all the world. But hereby is signified, that then these prophets had this privilege, to have true grace only, and the dews and influence of heaven to come down upon themselves, to have a truth of doctrine among them to save them; which fell not into the knowledge and hearts of these priests of Baal. You heard, chap. xiv. 3, that they had a peculiar song unto themselves, which none else could learn. Now all these dews of grace and saving doctrine were restrained and withheld from those idolaters, as a just curse upon them for their apostasy. Or—

(2.) In the times succeeding next to these first times; that is, from and

after the times of their separation from Popery, and upon their coming out of that Egypt. Then, as Moses and Aaron, they execute the like plagues to those of theirs on Egypt, even the three first vials, which are therefore also mentioned in this 6th verse; for which I refer you to the 16th chapter. And these are the days of that separation of churches from Antichrist, and first reformation, set forth in the 14th chapter.

SECTION III.

The acts of the witnesses in this their last age of prophecy. And, first, their devouring with fire, ver. 5, what? The allusion thereof unto Moses's destroying Nadab and Korah's company with fire, applied.

But then—

2. In their last days of all, towards the time of this new reformation of the temple, and before this their killing to come, they pour out the fourth vial in scorching and devouring their enemies with fire, as ver. 5 shews us. Even as Moses and Aaron, when the church was come out of Egypt, and in the wilderness, devoured Nadab with fire, Lev. x. 1, 2, and two hundred and fifty princes in the rebellion of Korah, Num. xvi. 35. And this devouring their enemies with fire holds not only to those that profess Popery, but of 'any man that shall hurt them,' though living among them; as you have it ver. 5.

Now observe how this type agrees with the face of things in this latter age. For as when this fell out, Moses had then brought the people out of Egypt, and had long before begun to set up the tabernacle and other ordinances of worship; so when falls out the rebellion of these men here devoured with fire? It is after the church has come out of that spiritual Egypt where these former plagues were executed, and after that public worship is erected and set up according to God's appointment in many things; that is, after the first great reformation made by Luther, &c. But here is a company of rebels that rise up against Moses for his endeavouring to keep to the word in his temple's frame and fabric, and for his calling for this at the builders' hands.

Observe the quarrel of both those companies then, and of these now.

The first quarrel then was about introducing human inventions in God's worship, which himself commanded not.

The second was, not only a renewing and continuing that quarrel, but further, to take away all distinction of persons in worshipping.

For the first; (1.) Nadab and Abihu, they offer strange fire—namely, the common culinary fire, which in God's worship was strange fire—before the Lord; which God commanded them not. For by his command, only fire from the altar should have been offered which originally came down from heaven. And so the sin for which they were devoured with fire, it was a transgression in bringing in, or continuing to use, such human inventions in worship as God had not commanded, and a justifying such to be warrantable. And—

(2.) That other company that clave to Korah, their sin was as their offering incense, not being true priests, so their quarrelling Moses and Aaron for putting such a difference between the people, as making some to be priests, (of the tribe of Levi.) and others not. Whenas, say they, 'all the people are holy;' and therefore 'ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi,' &c. Seeing every one throughout the whole congregation is holy, and so is as fit to worship and draw near to God as you, 'wherefore then lift you up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?' who, they thought, were God's

people, and whom he had chosen to draw near unto him. This was the quarrel, as Moses states it, ver. 5, and unto this sin they added rebellion, ver. 14.

Now, what has been the quarrel, that in England, which I instance most in, as being best known to us, and in some other reformed churches, which hath since the first Reformation been continued,—of the latter days of which times, this is especially here understood, for it is the fourth vial,—but about human inventions? Which are as that strange fire then which God commanded not, which yet are introduced and continued in worship, and by the most justified against the few witnesses, the pleaders for the commands of God to be the only rule of worship. And again—

Secondly, for that other, the putting such a difference between men and men, by the faithful witnesses and prophets, between the holy and the profane; this hath been another and a greater ground of hot and violent opposition against these witnesses. And for this, the latter of the two, as then also it was, these witnesses have all generally still preached that only those who have such or such a work of grace upon their hearts, and that do endeavour to walk thus and thus holily in their lives; that such only are saints, and the children of God. The stream of their ministry in England hath still run in this channel, thus to distinguish men from men, and to separate the precious from the vile, and this occasioned from that promiscuous mixture of all sorts. The chief work and bent of their ministry hath been to mark out whom God hath chosen, and who only are true priests and worshippers of him in spirit and truth. And for this, whatever hath otherwise been pretended, have those of the other side quarrelled, opposed, and silenced them, saying, as Korah's company, 'Are not all the people holy?' Have they not all been baptized? 'You take too much upon you,' you precise ones, out of the pride of your spirits, to 'lift up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord.'

Or else the quarrel hath been about God's own election of a few to be priests unto him, even as then, that God chose the tribe of Levi from the crowd of common Israelites, 'who are his, and whom he hath chosen;' as ver. 5 of Num. xvi. This was the quarrel then; and these now plead the cause of all mankind in universal grace and redemption.

All the quarrels between the Popish party, the number of the beast's name, and the witnesses, are reducible to these two heads:—

(1.) True purity of worship; and, (2.) true holiness, and peculiar election of worshippers.

And the light in both these things hath in our days grown up so high and clear, as that many of those who oppose either or both of these do sin even out of rebellion and presumption in opposing that the truth of which they are convinced of, as Korah's company did. And so their punishment cometh to be like to that of Nadab, and those two hundred and fifty of Korah's conspiracy, even fire from the Lord devouring them; which is, as was said in the fourth vial, a spiritual punishment on their souls; and this is the effect of the powerful conviction of the word out of the mouths of the witnesses, who spit fire into their consciences, and begin hell-fire beforehand. And this very allusion is thus interpreted and applied to that 'fearful expectation of wrath' which those have in their consciences who 'sin wilfully against the knowledge of the truth,' and so against the Holy Ghost, Heb. x. 26, 27.

And, indeed, bring but Paul's exposition there of this very type and example of those Israelites then, unto this allusion here made unto it by the angel; and that of Paul may clearly expound this of John. The allusion

there is to those who died by Moses's hand, and that 'without mercy,' for despising the law which he brought from God to them, and more particularly to those who 'died by fire,' as that phrase, 'the expectation of fiery indignation to devour the adversaries,' doth shew; who therein were true types of those that sin wilfully under the gospel, and despise it. They were types of these, both in their sin and punishment; for—

1. Their sin is rebellion, as the others' also was. Korah's company, after Moses's conviction of them, came to a despiteful scorning of Moses, and doing opprobrium to him for bringing them out of Egypt; as you may read, Num. xvi. 13, 14. And such is their sin mentioned, Heb. x. 26, even a 'sinning wilfully, after the receiving of the truth.' And so here in this 11th of the Revelation, the emphasis of their sin is put upon their wills,—'if any man *will* hurt them,'—and again it is repeated, 'if any man *will* hurt them,' ver. 5. And—

2. As they then were struck dead by God, upon their 'despising Moses's law,' and conviction of it 'under two or three witnesses,' as Paul interprets it, Heb. x., Moses and Aaron themselves testifying against them, and convincing them; so here, the angel adjudgeth them to this notorious death, for despising the testimony of these two witnesses, and the light of the gospel in their mouths.—Thus in their *sinning* they were true types of these.

And then, secondly, in their *punishment* they were their true types also; for—

1. A punishment they there have executed on them, of all the sorest, which Paul calls a 'dying without mercy.' So in that 10th to the Hebrews, 'How much sorer punishment,' says Paul, 'shall he be thought worthy of!' &c., sorer than that of Nadab and Korah's company there being devoured with elementary fire; and indeed so sore, as he knows not how to express it, but utters it by an imperfect indefinite speech, *how much sorer?* rather leaving it to us, from comparing their sins together, to conceive it, than that he was able to express it. And in like manner here also, their punishment, you see, hath this emphasis put upon it, 'in this manner he must be killed;' as noting out the extremest punishment that could be.

2. A punishment it is, not so much killing their bodies as their souls. So in the type, the fire that came forth rather blasted than burned them. Their bodies and clothes were left whole, Lev. x. 5. It burned and scorched their souls, not their bodies, say the Hebrew doctors; and so it was the liveliest type that could be, to lay a punishment upon their souls. Now unto such sinners under the gospel doth God answerably become 'a consuming fire.' Again—

3. That which here in the Revelation is called fire, is there by Paul expounded, 'fiery indignation,' and 'a fearful looking for of judgment,'—namely, in the consciences of those men who sin this sin,—φοβερὰ ἐκδοχὴ κρίσεως, a fearful and certain expectation of judgment, as it is in the original: God sealing up, by some flashes of his wrath, these men's eternal damnation, who do sin this sin. And this fiery indignation sparkles forth upon all occasions, from the writings and lives, and from the preachings and testimonies of these witnesses' mouths, as this place implies. And—

4. As Paul here useth the word, '*devouring* the adversaries;' so the same is used of them, Lev. x. 2. And so also here you see the same phrase used, '*devouring* their enemies.' In the original the same verb is used in one place that is in the other; and the word for enemies used Heb. x. 27 is ὑπεναντίους, *subcontrarios*, underhand adversaries: shewing that not always

those that thus sin do presently renounce all profession of God, as the Pharisees did not; for then they should not have place and opportunity to hurt the witnesses. So that they profess God still, but do underhand, and by pretences, oppose his people.

The like to this, we read the effect of the powerful light of the ministry of John Baptist and of Christ to have been: whose crucifying, as it is manifestly alluded unto here, in killing the two witnesses, from ver. 7 to ver. 14; so also this effect of his ministry on those Pharisees in those his times, who were tormented with it, is in the like manner alluded unto here, in those that were tormented with the light and heat of these witnesses' prophecy, as ver. 10 of chap. xi. expresseth it, which, chap. xvi. 9, is called a 'scorching men with great heat and pain.' Now John, and after him Christ, were 'burning and shining lights,' as Christ spake of John, which the Pharisees despising, the effect of their ministry upon many of these was this very sin, and so a tormenting of their consciences with this 'fiery indignation.'

And accordingly, in the prophet Malachi, we have the times of Christ's ministry, in this respect, called a 'terrible day that shall burn as an oven' those Pharisees' consciences; so Mal. iv. 1. And as it was the torment from Christ's ministry that made these Pharisees crucify him, though knowing him to be the Son of God; so it is the torment of these witnesses' ministry here, increasing so in light and power under the fourth vial, that causeth their adversaries to kill them; as, ver. 10 of this 11th chapter, is expressed.

And thus you have seen the power which they have against and over their enemies.

SECTION IV.

Secondly, their temple-work in their last days, in being two olive-trees, explained; from the allusion to Joshua's and Zerubbabel's finishing the temple.

But, *secondly*, their power is also further set out in that temple-work which they do for Christ and his church in these latter days, especially in that measuring, building, and finishing the temple, spoken of ver. 1. To represent which to us, the Holy Ghost hath called and singled out the most proper and choice type, and the most lively allusion that the Old Testament doth afford us. 'These,' says he, 'are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks, that minister before the God of the earth.'

Now, where in the Scriptures do we find this spoken, and of whom, and upon what occasion? Find but this, and by having recourse thereto, you will see all things suit and conspire to make up a full type of that work of this age. You have this vision of two olive-trees and a candlestick made unto Zechariah, as you may read in the 4th chapter of his prophecy, and the interpretation thereof. And it is made unto him on this occasion. The people coming out of Babylon's captivity, Joshua and Zerubbabel had from their first coming forth begun to sacrifice, and to set up public worship; and after two years began the erection of the temple, laid the foundation of it, and set up the altar, as you may read in the 3d of Ezra; but left the work imperfect, without the roof covered, or the temple as then adorned with all those holy utensils and ornaments of it which yet were ordinances that, to the complement and perfection of his worship then, God had appointed.

And you may further find, that they had then left the temple so incom-

plete, through the opposition of a Samaritan faction, that pretended to be for God as well as they. So, Ezra iv. 2, 'We seek your God,' say they, 'as you do.' Who yet were of a mongrel religion, between the Jews and Gentiles; as, 2 Kings xvii. 41, you may read. And being not taken into this work of building the temple, nor owned by the true Jews, they therefore hindered the people in building, ver. 4, and raised up the opposition of the Persian monarchy to frustrate their purpose, ver. 5, and made them to cease by force, ver. 24, 25, and so the work lay imperfect for years,—and yet, notwithstanding, it was a true temple and place of God's worship,—until God stirred up the prophets Zechariah and Haggai, by their prophecy, to move Joshua and Zerubbabel unto the finishing of this work, Ezra v. 1.

Now, among other visions which, to excite them to finish the work, the prophet Zechariah had had, this, in his 4th chapter, of two olive-trees and a candlestick, into which the olive-trees did empty their oil, was one. The meaning of which vision was this. The two olive-trees were Joshua and Zerubbabel, *sons of oil*, as in ver. 14 they are called. Which phrase notes out their being full of oil; as being those two who should lay out their grace, gifts, and estates, which was their oil, and spend their fatness, and use their heartiest endeavours in and for the repairing and finishing the temple. Which finishing of it is there represented by the candlestick, the candlestick being one of the most necessary utensils that went to make complete the glory of the temple; and so, by a *synecdoche*, is put for all the rest. And it being one of the last to be brought into the temple when once fully finished, and when the roof is covered, therefore it fitly served to resemble the finishing of that temple, and the adorning of it with all those accoutrements and ordinances which God had appointed for the perfection of it. And hence, in the exposition of this vision in that chapter, is Zerubbabel presented with a 'plummet in his hand,' and 'a measuring line,' to measure this temple to be now fully finished, even as here John is presented with a reed; and this promise is annexed, that in despite of that mountain of opposition raised by that Samaritan faction, ver. 7, Zerubbabel's hands, which 'had laid the foundation of this house,' even 'his hands shall also finish it;' as you have it, ver. 9.

And all this is made the meaning of that hieroglyphic, there represented, in a vision of two olive-trees and a candlestick: for, ver. 5, when the angel said to Zechariah, 'Knowest thou what these be?' that is, Knowest thou the meaning of this vision? and he said, 'No;' the angel answers, 'This is the word of the Lord,' namely, his mind in this vision, 'unto Zerubbabel,' &c.—namely, this which I before recited, about Zerubbabel's and Joshua's finishing the temple, as you may there read it interpreted by the angel.

Now this is the very type alluded unto here. And how fully suits it all our former interpretations given of measuring the temple? The church having been long since come out of mystical Babylon, hath set up public worship, and by the authority of princes hath begun the foundation of the temple; but hath been hindered from going on to full perfection of discipline intended and endeavoured, through the mixture of a Samaritan party, by whom they have been still interrupted from attaining that perfection which many have contended for. But in the end God stirs up many of the English spirits, like Joshua and Zerubbabel, to finish what was before left incomplete, and to begin to make a further and purer edition of churches according to the pattern. And so they stand in this age with a measuring line, as Zerubbabel, or a reed, as John here, in their hands; and, like these

two olive-trees, do empty oil out of themselves unto this work, endeavouring to add unto this temple such ordinances as, though to the being of a church not absolutely necessary, for they were temples before, yet are institutions of God, and do tend, as the candlestick then did, unto the perfection, beauty, complement, and glory of it. And though the foundation of this temple, laid in the first reformation, is in this allusion included, yet the allusion principally falls upon this finishing of it. For that is the most proper and peculiar aim of the vision of the olive-trees, as in Zechariah it is presented, unto which the allusion here is; the end of Zechariah's prophecy being to excite unto the finishing of the temple.

These two witnesses the Holy Ghost here calls the olive-trees and the candlesticks, which are the churches themselves, as chap. i. 20. So that both eminent persons, and likewise churches themselves, the purest of them, are the witnesses against the false church that are here spoken of.

But some would carry it thus: that the witnesses are the olive-trees *unto* the two candlesticks, the churches; for so in the vision of Zechariah they are mentioned as pouring oil *into* the candlesticks. And besides, the copulative *and* being in the Hebrew sometimes put for the preposition *unto*, according to this Hebraism, *καὶ* here should be so taken. And the churches now under the New Testament are called *two* candlesticks, whereas there in Zechariah is mention but of one candlestick, because now there is not one church only, as the Jews then had, but they are multiplied by particular congregations. There are sister churches now, and not one mother church only. And you shall sometimes, in the allusions to the temple, find in this book the proportion doubled to what it then was; to shew the increase of the gospel, as we observed out of the 4th chapter.

Now this new reformation of the church here typified out, though it be as yet but as their first attempts to finish the temple then were, even a 'day of small things,' (which who, almost, despiseth not?) yet it shall go on and spread, and at length be perfected, as that work then was. For it is of God, 'the God of the whole earth;' which attribute of his is here mentioned to shew the power that backs these builders, and to shew that now the work is not to be effected so much by power and might,—as that finishing the temple then is said to have been,—but by the Spirit, causing the hearts of the godly to fall to it. And that Samaritan 'mountain' of opposition, even Rome itself, that hath stood in the way of it, shall in the end 'become a plain before it;' as there, Zech. iv. 5–7, that Samaritan faction did before Zerubbabel.

And out of this temple are the vials to come, and to pour out their plagues upon this false church, as you may read chap. xvi. 1. So that the true church is still ordained to be the ruin of the false. And 'when that which is more perfect comes, that which is imperfect will be done away.'

And however the beginning of this work may seem small and contemptible, yet the work itself is of such moment and concernment for God and his glory, and shall so far go on and prosper, as he is pleased in this book to take notice of it; as of any further progress of his church unto purity he still doth, as in the 14th chapter we have seen. And yet I fear these olive-trees and candlesticks among us will, as the rest of the churches in Europe, have their 'power scattered' ere this building be fully finished. But after this, they shall revive again, and 'grow up into an holy temple unto the Lord,' from the times of the witnesses' rising, after their being killed, until the New Jerusalem, as chap. xix. will shew.

Now, to make the allusion to the condition of Joshua more full, I will only add this, that as these witnesses are here presented in sackcloth, so is

Joshua there, in 'filthy apparel,' Zech. iii. 4. And as there he had change of raiment given him, so after a few years will these witnesses also have the 'garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness,' as Isaiah speaks; and their testimony being ended, they shall put off their sackcloth, and put on 'fine linen,' the wedding apparel of the Lamb's bride, as chap. xix. you have it. And so in the end, the glory of this temple, set up after Antichrist's demolishment, will yet be rendered more glorious, as that of Zerubbabel's also was, by Christ's coming into it. And a holy of holies shall be added unto it, or rather swallow this up, in which 'the ark shall be seen,' as it is in the last verse of this 11th chapter. But these witnesses must be killed first; which is the last thing I am to speak of in this chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

The killing of the witnesses, ver. 7–10 of the 11th chapter.

SECTION I.

The time of their three years and a half not yet come.—A reconciliation of this and Mr Brightman's opinion, in a double fulfilling of it.

THIS angel's scope is, as was said, to shew how, according to the angel's oath in Daniel, Antichrist should 'accomplish to scatter the power of the holy people,' towards the end of his reign of 'a time, times, and half a time.' And so, what is here said of the beast's war and victory refers not to the conquests and slaughters which Antichrist, during his whole reign, should make of the holy people, or witnesses, spoken of chap. xiii.; but particularly designeth out an eminent prevailing over them at the last, or, as the first words of ver. 7 have it, ὅταν τελέσωσι, &c., 'when they are about to finish' or end the term of their prophecy in sackcloth, even their 1260 years; which is the same space that Antichrist hath allotted to him to reign in. Now, what power these holy people, the witnesses, had got before this their last scattering, hath in their description been declared. They had power to erect a temple to themselves, and out of it to pour forth four vials upon their enemies, as hath been shewn. And that they might the better fence themselves against the beast, possessing the greatest part of Europe, the holy city, we have heard how they had environed the temple with a mighty party of carnal professors, separating with them from the beast, as with an outward court; which, we have seen by ver. 1, the Gentiles are again to subdue unto themselves and to tread down. Which 'treading down their outward court' is indeed one part of that his last 'accomplishment to scatter the power of the holy people,' or haply it may rather be termed a preparation unto it. For come at the witnesses they could not, till this outward court were gained. Which, when they shall have more fully won, which is now a-doing, then they further shall 'kill the witnesses;' for then both they and their inner temple will be exposed to the irruptions of the Gentiles, and will be easily subdued by them, whenas their outworks shall first be thus taken and recovered. And this will not be fully done till even towards the finishing their allotted time of prophesying in sackcloth,—and so of the beast's reigning, which is to expire soon after it,—with their ascension into heaven. Now—

I. For the times when this last 'killing' of them here intended shall come to execution; the question among interpreters is, Whether it be yet past or yet to come?

Mr Brightman, as was said, maketh this measuring the temple to be long since fulfilled and past. So also this killing the witnesses here, and the expiration of their time of prophesying in sackcloth, to be already wholly past;

and this in that great overthrow of the Protestant party in Germany by Charles the Fifth, anno 1547, and in that condemning the Scriptures, which he makes the witnesses, by the Council of Trent about that time, now well-nigh a hundred years since.

But most others, as Graserus, Matthias Hoe, Mr Mede, Mr Wood, &c., do think it yet to come. And according to that series of interpretation hitherto by me given, if that hold good, it must necessarily be as yet to be executed. And it seems to me most evident, both by what is said to go before it, and also to follow after it; of which nothing that is to follow after it is yet fulfilled, although a hundred years, since the time that Mr Brightman interprets it of, are run out. For—

1. This is to fall out towards the ending of their prophecy in sackcloth, or of their mourning and oppressed condition, after which they are to cast off their sackcloth. As Joshua's filthy garments—who was one of the types of these—were taken from him, and a 'fair mitre was set upon his head;' so after their resurrection, these witnesses are to be clothed in 'fine linen,' as you may read, chap. xix. Now it is evident that the time of their prophesying in sackcloth, of bewailing the condition of the church under Antichrist, and of their oppression by him, is not yet out. The filthy garments they wore during their captivity in Babylon, they still have on; as Joshua also had his on in Zechariah's time, which was a long while after they were come forth out of Babylon. So the true witnesses are still in an oppressed condition, whilst Antichrist's church, and those of their enemies even in the reformed churches, are as the church-triumphant, in silk, and at their full liberty.

2. This is here to fall out towards the ending of the reign of Antichrist, in respect of his 'power to do;' for this is that last scattering, prophesied of by Daniel, with which he is to accomplish his times. Now we see he hath his kingdom yet standing, and his power to do; and there are a hundred years more run on since that havoc made of them by the Papists in Germany, and yet Antichrist's forty-two months are not expired, we being now but under the fifth vial. And when the seat or throne of the beast—Rome itself—shall come to be ruined, then shall his kingdom be full of darkness, and the glory of it so damped and extinguished, as it is thought, that from that time his reign is accounted of as at an end. And—

3. We see Antichrist as yet but in his first march towards this war; he is but now going forth to win the outward court, which he must again recover ere he can come at the witnesses; and this killing of them is placed here, after his recovery of that. And though he hath trod down Germany, yet he is but setting up and advancing his engines of assault and battery upon other such places where God hath the most of his powerful witnesses in these last times: though already he be evidently set down in his siege of them also, by his instruments, and those that receive the number of his name, who are to be his last champions.

4. We evidently see by what is gone before in the description of these witnesses, that four vials of the seven are to be poured out by them before this their killing. For in the days of their prophecy, they 'smite the earth' with plagues, which is the first vial; and turn the 'sea and rivers into blood,' which is the second and third vial; and then 'devour men with fire,' which is the fourth. And then after all these exploits of theirs, comes their killing. So that this falls out after, or under, the fourth vial. But that slaughter a hundred years since was but under the second vial, and indeed but in the beginning of that vial; and we as yet see not the full effect of the

fourth vial, which is but now a-pouring forth. And therefore this killing of the witnesses here is not as yet fulfilled.

5. After their rising again, the 'second woe' is said to 'pass away.' Now that second woe is the sixth trumpet, which then is said to pass away when the times of it are expired, or the foundation of its ruin laid. And that sixth trumpet is, as hath been said, the Turk, and his great power and tyranny. Whose kingdom we see yet to stand in its full vigour and flourish, and no fundamental blow of weakening given to it.

6. Much less is the seventh trumpet begun to be blown, which yet is to 'come quickly' after the sixth, as you have it ver. 14. For although Jesus Christ, in these northern kingdoms, hath been assisted in that his harvest of his elect since the Reformation, by supreme and princely authority; and therefore, chap. xiv., that peaceable harvest was reaped by an angel crowned, yet—

(1.) The kingdoms of the world becoming Christ's, for him to reign for ever, and this at the beginning of this seventh trumpet, his kingdom then shall be another manner of one than as yet he hath had; even that fifth monarchy which is mentioned in Dan. vii. 14, and is to begin at the end of the days of the beast. And, if you mark the words, this shall be a kingdom that shall not be administered by deputies, and by a delegated power; but by Christ the king's immediate rule and government: 'Thou hast taken to thyself thy great power, and hast reigned,' &c., ver. 17. And—

(2.) When that seventh trumpet shall begin to sound, 'then,' as chap. x., 'shall that mystery be fulfilled spoken of by the prophets,' and which Paul calls a mystery, Rom. xi., even the 'New Jerusalem,' and 'kingdom of the saints,' and the 'first resurrection,' as appears by ver. 15–17 of this chapter, compared with chap. xx., xxi., &c. But now since that resurrection of the witnesses, which Mr Brightman would have this to be, is almost a hundred years, and yet none of these things are begun, nor as yet to begin.

(3.) The seventh trumpet, and the last vial, as hath been often said, do fall out together; or rather, the last vial begins the seventh trumpet, as the last verse of this 11th chapter, compared with the seventh vial, chap. xvi., doth shew; for there are the same thunderings, hail, &c., in them both. Now we are yet but under the fourth vial, and so very far off from the last.

Yet I will add this, which may reconcile that opinion of Mr Brightman with this other, and haply serve in the closure of all to give some small further hint about the time of the last vial's fulfilling, and so concerning the expiring of times before mentioned.

As I said before, about the measuring the temple, that the angel might have an aim, both at that first laying the foundation of true churches, and also at this second reformation now in hand, and take both in his view at once, they both being degrees of the same work; yet so as ultimately he looks unto the latter, as the special intendment of this place, though the other were in itself infinitely far the greater work: so I conjecture that he might take in two killings of these witnesses, which should follow after, or it may be, accompany both those measurings; the one at or after that foundation laid, the other at or upon the finishing to be begun, and so ordered that the first should be a foregoing resemblance of this other to succeed. Yet so as his ultimate aim and scope still should be at a latter killing of them, which is yet to come.

I have observed it in many instances, which I could produce, that many prophecies in Scripture have had two several gradual accomplishments, whereof both the one and the other are intended by the Holy Ghost; yet so

as the latter is usually more eminently intended, and the first sometimes intended as a foregoing type of that which is to follow. You may observe many passages quoted out of the prophets, and applied by the apostles in the New Testament unto the times of the gospel, as being then fulfilled, which yet had a gradual accomplishment under the Old Testament, in the times after the captivity of Babylon. So that the Holy Ghost aimed at both. Thus the 9th verse of the 1st chapter of Isaiah is quoted by Paul, Rom. ix., and applied unto the gospel times.

Yea, and you shall sometimes find the same prophecy even under the Old Testament fulfilled over and over; and so to have two several intended accomplishments. For instance, I will give one which some learned men have fallen upon, although I find others do dissent from them in it. And I rather pitch upon it, because it is proper to the thing in hand; for it is made the type of this measuring the temple. It is that prophecy of rebuilding the temple after the seventy years' captivity in Babylon; which, as some think, had a double accomplishment aimed at. And as there were two eminent leadings into captivity, the one of Jechoniah, the other of Zedekiah, when the city was destroyed; so, according to learned chronologers and best interpreters, I find a double reckoning of the seventy years, and of the building again of the temple: some reckoning from that captivity of Jechoniah, in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar; some from that of Zedekiah, in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, as the Jesuits Sanctius and Ribera do affirm. I will not meddle with the dispute about it; but that God kept a double reckoning of that seventy years, in respect to a double gradual accomplishment, to me seems evident. For Ezekiel begins the captivity from that carrying away of Jechoniah, Ezek. i. 2, 3; and the prophet Jeremiah, in the 29th chapter of his prophecy, ver. 10, comforts those that were carried away with Jechoniah with this, that after seventy years God will visit them, &c. Now one seventy years was ended, when Cyrus gave leave to lay the foundation of the temple, as reckoning from the first captivity. And yet after this, in Zechariah's time, when the temple was to be again measured and finished, there is another seventy years said to be ended; as the time wherein this temple, which hitherto had lain imperfect, was to be perfected. This you may see by Zech. i. 12, 16, compared. For there the final ending of the seventy years is made the foundation of the last work of perfecting the temple, and God's returning in mercy, according to his promise, for to do it. So that a double captivity, and a double seventy years, ending in a double work, the one of laying the foundation, the other of finishing the temple, seem to have been in the Holy Ghost's eye.

Now why may it not be so, even in this also, that the computation of the beast's reign, and the church's coming out of Babylon, the killing of the witnesses, and the measuring of the temple, may have a double accomplishment and expiration, and all intended, yet so as the latter mainly aimed at?

The like instance might be made of the computation of another period of time and prophecy fulfilled, which, because I may, in the closure of this 11th chapter, have particular cause to mention, I will also instance in. It is that of Daniel, chap. xii. 11; the things in which chapter refer to the times of the end, under the New Testament, when is the time of which the angel tells him that 'knowledge should be increased,' &c. And Daniel inquiring when these things should be, the angel answers, 'From the time that the daily sacrifice'—namely, of the Jews—'shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.' Now by history it is evident, that there hath been a double taking

away of the Jewish sacrifice under the days of the New Testament, and a double setting up the abomination of desolation; that is, heathenish idolatry. And so a double computation must needs be taken of these 1290 years.

When Vespasian and his son Titus sacked Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and advanced heathenish idolatry in the room of it, then was one time when both these things were evidently done; both the Jewish sacrifice taken away, and the 'abomination that maketh desolate' set up. And if from that time we reckon 1290 years, that first setting up heathenism instead of the Jewish worship being in the year after Christ's birth 69 or 70, they end in 1359 or 1360; when indeed the first great increase of knowledge, and discovery of Antichrist began, under Wickliff, Thaulerus, &c., and a great diffusion of the light of the gospel amongst us Gentiles. But there was another, both 'ceasing of the daily sacrifice,' and setting up of heathenish idolatry, by Julian the apostate emperor, about the year 363, who both suppressed the Christian religion, typified out by the daily sacrifice, after it had been set up by Christian emperors, and also advanced heathenish worship. Yea, he did set up the Jewish sacrifice again, which till his time had ceased, and was then taken away, and never unto this day set up again. And it is observable how special a hand God hath had in binding the Jews from setting up their daily sacrifice at Jerusalem again. The Turk, whom they live under, tolerates all other religions, and theirs also in all other exercises of it, but suffers them not to live at Jerusalem or to sacrifice there; and yet permits the Christians to inhabit in it, and to possess the sepulchre of the Lord, and to perform all rites of their religion. And though the Jews would give much more for the like kind of liberty, to have that place to dwell in, and to sacrifice there, yet it is prohibited them.

Now from either of these times above-mentioned may this computation of 1290 years be taken: the one respecting the blessed times when the more clear light of the gospel, and the discovery of Antichrist, began to come among us Gentiles; the other those happy times to come, when the Jews shall first be recalled, which some fix about the year 1655 or 1656. And so two accomplishments of those 1290 years.

Now then, to return unto the thing in hand. Mr Brightman, he reckons the beginning of Antichrist's reign, and the witnesses' beginning to prophesy in sackcloth, from the time of the Roman emperors' removing to Constantinople; which he interprets to be that 'taking him that letted out of the way,' as Paul to the Thessalonians hath it,—namely, the emperor,—who being removed to Constantinople, and the Pope having Rome, ordained to be the seat of the beast, thus left him, he might soon begin to gain power. And that, indeed, from thence his first conception did begin, may not be, nor is it by most, denied. And so Mr Brightman, from thence beginning the 1260 years of the witnesses' prophesying in sackcloth, which falls eighteen years short, according to the account he makes, after that of Egypt, and of our vulgar account, makes the end of those years to fall out in 1550, when the rising again of the Protestant cause in Germany did begin. And thus in like manner the term of Antichrist's kingdom or power to do (namely, as formerly he had wont) might be reckoned to have had one kind of period in the falling off of these kingdoms of England, Scotland, &c., which fell out not many years after this, even before 1560,—which Mr Brightman, according to that his series of interpretation, interpreteth to be the seventh trumpet, when the kingdoms of the world became the kingdoms of Jesus Christ,—and so before that settled peace of the gospel established, and the throwing of Antichrist and his power out of those kingdoms. In all which kingdoms

the witnesses had first their times of being overcome and killed for three years and a half, though at several times in each of them. So in Germany, in that victory got over the Protestants, anno 1547, or thereabouts; just three years and a half after which they revived and enjoyed that peace which since they have had.

In like manner in England, after that, in Queen Mary's days, whose reign, although it lasted five whole years, yet the first part of her reign was spent in 'making war' upon the witnesses, or, as I may so speak, in the preparations of war against the witnesses, in getting statutes made for their burning, &c.; and the killing and martyring of them was but for three years and a half. After which ended, they rose again in Queen Elizabeth's beginning to reign, and have since that time hitherto enjoyed, as it were, a heaven.

Thus also in France, in the year 1572, which was fourteen years after, and about 1260 years after Constantine, (according to our account of years,) the massacre of the Protestants began, and in appearance an extinction of the religion, as they called it, for three years and a half: when, anno 1576, their peace and liberty was again granted them, and they had a manifest resurrection. Thus God observed a gradual fulfilling of this their killing and rising, as a shadow foregoing that great and last one to come.

But then there is another computation of the beginning of Antichrist's reign, and of the witnesses' prophesying in sackcloth in opposition to him, reckoning it from his birth and bringing forth into the world, as that former was from the time of his conception, about a hundred years after Constantine, in anno 406 or 410, when not only the Roman emperors were removed out of the way unto Constantinople, but also the western empire itself began first to break into ten kingdoms. Which is the truest and utmost character of the time of the beast's rising, as was shewed in our exposition of the 17th chapter. Which breaking the western empire was that 'taking out of the way' which Paul especially aimed at. For then the Pope had full scope to get his power, which these new kingdoms were to give unto him. Which term of his, if the reckoning be made after the ordinary compute of years, will end in 1666 or thereabout.

Now as there is this other computation of the Pope's times, (beginning and ending,) which falls out in this century of years now running on; so also in this same century, since the year 1600, there hath answerably been begun another, or second measuring the temple, as being to precede the expiration of this other computation of the witnesses' prophesying, which is yet to come. And in like manner also there will follow another great and eminent slaughter of the witnesses, and prevailing of the beast over them, before this second computation of his and their time be ended; that is, before 1666.

SECTION II.

The allusion unto Christ's last passion, in this last slaughter of the witnesses, explained.

Thus much in general for the time of the witnesses' killing. Now—

II. To come to the thing itself. For the understanding of which I shall also in the general premise this:—

That this their last *killing, rising, &c.*, is represented in an allusion unto the story of Christ's own crucifying and rising again; which makes this the most remarkable of all former sufferings, in that it is in an exact 'conformity

death,' and to the circumstances of it. In all other passages of this the allusions are still to stories of the Old Testament. But this, in a er alone, alludes to that great and eminent story of Christ's passion esurrection, which are the centre of all, both in the Old and New ment. And whereas all other stories in the Old are but types of the ngs and resurrection of Christ, here those sufferings and that resur- n of his are made the pattern of these of the witnesses; and that not ject of that general, common conformity that is in all the sufferings the saints for Christ and his gospel unto those of Christ,—as Paul , Phil. iii. 10, and therefore calls them the 'after-sufferings of the of Christ,' Col. i. 24,—but this here is made such in some peculiar acy and transcendency, above all sufferings that have been formerly in ge; and it being the last, it is in a singular manner set forth unto us y. Which may at once both provoke us to prepare for it, as Christ hen he knew what he should suffer; and also comfort us against it, ng therein in a peculiar manner to be made conformable unto Christ: will draw on with it a peculiar conformity also in reigning with him ry.

r that the allusion here is indeed unto the last sufferings of Christ, acknowledged and observed by all interpreters. And it appears in circumstance here related.

for example, in that, as he, after three-years-and-a-half's preaching earth once finished,—when that he had almost carried it in the people's , the world going after him,—was yet in the end prevailed upon by his es, and put to death by the foreign power of the city of Rome, having risdiction over Jerusalem, and for three days did lie in their power: ike manner that these witnesses, after three-years-and-a-half's (for that exact compute of 1260 days, or forty-two months) prophesying well- expired, and now when they are about even to finish it,—having so ily prevailed in the people's hearts, that their Pharisæan enemies are of utterly losing their credit and authority,—that then these Pharisees, acknowledging the foreign power of Rome, should prevail over these nes, and that so far as by and under the authority and jurisdiction of ast, and for his sake, should now at last kill them, and have them in power for three years and a half; which do bear a like proportion to 1260 years or days forepassed, that Christ's three days did to his three forepassed; their enemies also rejoicing, feasting, and sending gifts for at they had them thus down, and in their power; even as the Pharisees ; that their great feast of the passover, when they were, as they thought, the torment which Christ's ministry had put them to, and made it the last feast and passover that ever they kept: after all which, that those nes should notwithstanding rise again, even as our Lord did, and rise an earthquake, as he then did, and with an affright to their enemies ee it, as befell those soldiers who saw his,—and after this should ascend up to heaven, as he did;—all this makes the allusion here very full and observable. And se the Holy Ghost thus alluded unto Christ's sufferings, therefore John, y of parenthesis, puts in these words, speaking of the place where this ter was to be: 'in the city,' says he, 'where our Lord also was crucified,' . That same ὅπου καὶ, *where also*, may have a double reference: it s a copulative relate to the former cities unto which he had resembled m Sodom and Egypt, in this sense, 'and that city also where our

Lord was crucified;' that is, Jerusalem. And it may as well refer unto the word *crucified* in this sense: where our Lord was before in like manner crucified, there are these now in like manner to be killed.

SECTION III.

That this killing of the witnesses is to be executed by and under the power of the beast of Rome; and so could not be meant of any of the former persecutions in the reformed churches, which were from among themselves.

Thus much in general for the understanding this great occurrence which is yet to come in the church.

Now more particularly to explain some things about it, though it be a difficult thing to hit right in the understanding, and much more in applying the circumstances of a prophecy unto things to come, and which the events do best interpret.

1. Take notice, that the power and authority by which this slaughter shall be made is to be that of the beast, or the Pope of Rome; and this as having regained more or less power in these places where these witnesses are. This is evident—

(1.) In that not so much their enemies who are among them, and of the reformed religion with them, that yet hate them, but 'the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit,' is said to kill them. And—

(2.) In that he calls the place where their dead bodies lie, and so, by consequence, where this slaughter is to be executed, 'the city where our Lord was crucified.' Which is not spoken of Jerusalem, but of Rome; that being here called the great city, which, chap. xvii. 18, is called 'the city which then ruled over the kings of the earth;' which can be none but Rome. And to make this good, we are to know, that the jurisdiction of the Roman empire was then in John's time called 'the city.' And therefore the whole world was called *Orbis Romanus*, the Roman world. And in like manner now, all kingdoms subjected to the Pope are called the church of Rome, as together making that great city. And in that world the city of Rome was the regal palace, from whence issued out edicts and commands over all. And in such a sense it is said, 'the city where Christ was crucified;' because it was the Roman power and authority by which he was put to death, though it were done at Jerusalem, for thither did the jurisdiction of Rome reach; and therefore Christ says, 'they should deliver him up unto the Gentiles,' Matt. xx. 19,—that is, the Romans, who then had trodden down that holy city, and got the command of it; the Pharisees owning Cæsar for their king. And thus now for the killing these witnesses, it must be that the beast of Rome shall again recover so much owning and acknowledgment in the places of the Reformation, whether by secret combination or by professed avouchment God only knows, where the witnesses are to be killed; so as, for his sake, and at his instigation, these Pharisees, either as joining with him, or else using the help of his party, shall kill them. And so far must the beast have a hand in it, that he may truly be said to do it; and that in order to the further advancement of his power in those places. And therefore—

(3.) The place where their dead bodies are said to lie is said to be πλατεία πόλεως τῆς μεγάλης,—'the street,' the extension of the jurisdiction, 'of the great city,'—as being within the jurisdiction or walls of it, as it were. You heard before how that the Gentiles were to regain the outward court, and so it to become part of the city again, and within the extent of its jurisdiction.

So that, however the witnesses have had enemies from among themselves, o have been, as those Pharisees were to Christ, of the same nation and igion, and yet have persecuted them from the first, even from the times of first reformation downward, and therefore it hath been that the faithful nesses have continued to prophesy in sackcloth and mourning, even now their last days, when yet a separation hath been made from Antichrist, ause those among them still continued to oppress them; yet none of all se wars and prevailings against them all that while, by those of their own, this same war and killing of them here so eminently set out. For this st be by the beast, even by their enemies combining with the Papists, or ng the help of the beast, to join with them against the witnesses; or, it y be, beginning again to submit to the beast, in a more open and avowed nner, as those Pharisees did to Cæsar. And so, for his sake, and to ad- ce his power, shall they kill those witnesses, who indeed are only and e the greatest and most hearty withstanders of him, and that will stand ut against him. Or if, when this is done, they do not so openly avow beast's power, yet it may be said to be done by the beast, if by a party ombination of men that are for him, though not professedly, yet who, in r to reduce his power into those churches, do raise this war against the nesses and oppress them. And that which may give suspicion of this is ause, as I shewed out of chap. xiii., there is a generation of men set forth the beast's last champions, who yet should not, at least at the first, so nly own his name or character, that yet receive the 'number of his name.' l these are there reckoned his as truly as the other, as being they who uld interdict buying and selling to the beast's opposites, in order unto advancement. And they doing this in order unto the beast and for him, beast therefore and his power may be said to do it.

ut I fear that they shall proceed yet further, even to an open acknow- gment and professing the Pope's power, though perhaps not as infallible d of the church, yet as universal patriarch of the west, and so endeavour- to effect a union and reconciliation with him. For these men, as was , are to bring in but an image of Popery, as it was of heathenism, espe- ly at first, though with intent to introduce more. And with this doth speech of the angel in his oath, Dan. xii. 7, accord, which, as I said, angel here came to renew and interpret; that when 'he,' namely, this t, 'shall have accomplished,' namely, with this last killing, 'to scatter power of the holy people,' &c.

hat which I here cite this for is, that it must be he and his power that t do it. And in that the Gentiles are here said to obtain the outward rt, ver. 1, so as to 'tread it down' with the rest of the holy city; this uld argue a prevailing of them, so far as to gain a subjection from carnal testants, by reason of which it shall be that even the beast's power, as ntained and owned by the most, may be said to kill them. And like- the allusion here to Christ's suffering, by the power that then Rome in Jerusalem, the holy city, would argue this also. That even as then, overnor, or president, from Rome, namely Pilate, lay at Jerusalem, and , in the name and power of Rome, the author of Christ's crucifying; so, ast, that Rome should now in like manner have her legates, that should power in these places to procure the deposition and death of these nesses. That so, as God ordained Jerusalem, the city where Christ was ified, unto which the allusion here is made, to be the slaughter-house of the prophets, insomuch that Christ said, 'It was not possible that a pro- t should perish but in Jerusalem;' and therefore it was that himself was

so secure that he should not be killed until he came thither; so that Rome is in like manner ordained to have a hand in the deaths of all the witnesses, though others may persecute them too. And so this last and great slaughter and martyrdom of them shall be executed by her. That so when at her downfall she comes to be reckoned with, it may be said, as it is in chap. xviii. 24, that 'in her was found the blood of the prophets, and of the saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.' And therefore, until the Romish flag be advanced upon the walls of the outward court of this temple, reckon not this time of the witnesses' three years and a half to be come. But when you see that abomination of desolation begun to be set up, then flee into the mountains, as Christ in another case speaks.

SECTION IV.

The time of the beast's enjoying this full victory but three years and a half. —The time of obtaining it, and of killing the witnesses, may be longer.

2. For the time of the continuance of this slaughter. Whereas there is here mentioned the beast's 'making war against them, and overcoming and killing them,' then 'when they are about to finish their testimony,'—that is, towards the time of the end of it,—and then their 'lying dead for three days and a half;' we must herein warily take heed we mistake not this only mentioned time of three years and a half, as if that were all the time allotted for this last war against them, victory over them, and slaughter of them. No, it is not said they should be overcoming and killing them only so long time; but that these witnesses should lie dead no longer, after a full victory obtained, and slaughter once made. So that that war against them, and killing of them, may be much longer in execution than for three days and a half only. And indeed, how long that shall continue before these three years and a half begin, we know not. The Gentiles have already been a long while a-besieging and making war against the temple, and have not as yet prevailed. It is not yet come to an overcoming of so much as the outward court; that out-work is not yet fully enough gained: for the winning of the outward court I account part of this their making war against the witnesses. But how long soever this war may prove, and how far soever it may be lengthened out, yet when it comes to a complete victory once, then, for our comfort, we are sure that the time of the witnesses' lying dead shall be but for three years and a half, until their rising, or beginning to rise again. And as in a great eclipse of the moon, the time whilst all or most of its body is darkened, and whilst that eclipse is in its fulness, useth especially to be set down and taken notice of by astronomers, and that time is especially accounted the time of the eclipse, and not so much the time when it begins to lose, or after that to recover some light: so is it here in this great and last hour of darkness which the church is to have, wherein the time of its total eclipse is only reckoned. The Pharisees were long a-laying their plots against Christ, and consulting how to ruin him, but at the last prevailed only for three days. And thus all hitherto done is but the war in order to this conquest; the enemies are as yet but a-taking the out-works, and making their approaches, &c.

3. For this time here mentioned of their lying dead, it is but for three years and a half, which is here called three days and a half; whereby three natural days, consisting of twenty-four hours, cannot be meant. For how shall the noise of this full victory be carried to nations and tongues, who are said to 'see their dead bodies,' partly in that respect of having the news of

it? And how shall the whole Roman party universally rejoice, and send gifts one to another to congratulate this victory? These three days, therefore, and a half, in which they are to lie dead, are such as those 1260 days formerly mentioned were, even prophetical days, taken according to the style of the prophets, namely, days for years. And such a three years and a half had Jerusalem, the holy city, under Antiochus, when the temple was polluted, and 'the daily sacrifice,' God's true worship, 'taken away,' and heathenish idolatry, which there, and still elsewhere in Daniel, is called the 'abomination that maketh desolate,' set up; and when those that were the most eminent for godliness did fall by the sword and by captivity, (as you have it Dan. xi. 31, &c.,) for many days. But the last persecution of his reign was for three years and a half, as in 1 Macc. i. 30 to chap. vi. you have it recorded. But in the 11th chapter of Daniel, where this Antiochus is prophesied of, he is in this made the type of Antichrist; and therefore after that the prophet had thus set forth and ended that his tyranny at ver. 35 of that chapter, he begins, ver. 36, to set out the Pope and his tyranny unto the end of the chapter: so passing from the type to the antitype, even as Christ doth, in the 24th of Matthew, from the story of the destruction of Jerusalem to that of the end of the world, because that was a type of it. And therefore it is that Daniel useth this transition, ver. 35 of that 11th chapter, when he had ended Antiochus's story, that there remains yet 'a time ordained,' so Graserus and others read it,—that is, yet another series of the fates to be related, whereof this was the type; and so he passeth on to describe Antichrist (who is that king mentioned ver. 36) unto the end of that chapter, whose ruin and end, he says, should be after 'ill tidings to him out of the north'—that is, the reformation of religion in these northern countries—had so enraged him as to cause him to 'go forth in fury,' at his last endeavouring utterly to root out, &c. And in which expedition he should so far prevail as to 'plant his tabernacle on the glorious holy mountain,' that is, to overrun the church. Which, indeed, I take to be all one with this last war and killing the witnesses here, for it is there just before his end too, for three years and a half; whereof that last prevailing over the Jews by Antiochus was the type. And such a like time, as I said before, had the Pharisees over Christ, even three days, which Christ calls the 'hour of darkness;' even as this is thought to be that 'hour of temptation to come over the whole (Christian) world,' Rev. iii. 10. The enemies, indeed, think to have the day of it, but they shall have only the hour of it. This great and fearful eclipse, in the fulness of it, shall last no longer; this is their hour.

And such a like space of time is used in Scripture to express a short time; as Hos. vi. 2, 'After two days he will revive us, and in the third day raise us up,' &c.

Again, such a like time had Julian over the church, when he had again set up heathenism. Some say his reign was three years long, though others say less. And so hath God ordered it, for the like holy ends, that as heathenism had a prevailing again in the world, before it was utterly extirpated, for that small time in Julian's reign, and this even after that Christianity had been set up forty years before by the imperial power of Constantine; so that Popery (the image of it) should in like manner expire, and after a glorious reformation made by kingly power, and casting out of Popery in many states, that it should yet have a prevailing over those churches, or the eminentest of them, once again before its final and utter extirpation.

SECTION V.

The sharpness and the extent of this victory, how great; whether unto death natural or martyrdom discussed.

Concerning the sharpness of this victory of the beast, and of the Popish party, how far it shall extend; as—

Whether unto blood or to martyrdom and to death natural of the witnesses, and whether this killing here be meant of such a kind?

I find some who interpret all done to them to be meant of a civil death, not a natural; that is, a killing them considered as witnesses, not as men; that is, a taking away all power from them of prophesying as they had wont—a general silencing of ministers, and deposing magistrates and men of worth that profess and uphold religion, putting them from their places, shutting their shops, burning their books, &c. And for this makes—

1. That their death and lying dead here is but correspondent to their resurrection. Now, their resurrection is not from a natural death, and therefore such not their killing.

2. That their bodies, when dead, are said to 'lie in the street of the great city for three days and a half,' and after that a 'spirit of life to come into' those dead bodies. Now, that cannot be meant of naturally dead men, for their bodies cannot be supposed to have lain naturally dead so long above-ground. And then, in that the spirit of life is said to enter into those bodies that were dead, and in that it must be supposed that those lay dead who are first here said to be killed, all this would seem to carry it to the very same individual persons that were killed, that they should rise; which to suppose of a natural resurrection before the day of Christ, we have no warrant nor any ground for.

And accordingly they interpret that following passage, that those of the nations, tongues, and kindreds, suffer them not to be put in graves, as that which may be construed and taken in the better part, as shewing what should hinder their enemies from killing them outright, namely, that there was a party of Protestants in the nations about them that should hinder their enemies from martyring and utterly extinguishing them, and should preserve them above-ground for a reviving; even as men whom we think not dead, but in a swoon, we use to keep out of the grave, and not bury them, because we hope they may revive again. And so these Protestants, that the cause may again prevail, they may preserve the persons. And this the rather appears the intendment here, in that these of the nations, tongues, and kindreds seem to be a diverse and distinct company from the enemies of the witnesses; for of their enemies, that is said which follows in the next verse, 'And those that dwelt on the earth rejoiced over them,' &c. As if the angel went about to describe the differing spirits of the two sorts of men, of whom he speaks, towards these witnesses: the one, whom he calls those of nations, tongues, and kindreds, as friends doing them this kind office, as 'not to suffer their bodies to be put in graves;' but the other, whom, as diverse from these, he calls under a new phrase, 'those that dwell on the earth,' as enemies rejoicing over them.

Which makes this suffering of the witnesses herein alone to differ from Christ's,—unto which, in all other circumstances, the allusion holds,—that Christ was really killed, and therefore buried. But these, though killed as witnesses, yet are not suffered to be buried; as noting out a keeping them from an extinction, or an utter taking them out of the way, though by their

enemies they be suppressed. And it may be, that as Christ foretold his resurrection the third day, and so it was commonly known and bruited, that even the Pharisees had knowledge of it, and said unto Pilate, 'This deceiver said he would rise the third day,' which they laughed at as a vain dream: so it may be, this very notion of such a prevailing of the Popish party for three years and a half, which hath been so long and so much spoken of in the church, shall be so commonly known, as already it begins to be, that for that very cause these friends of theirs may so far interpose as to hinder the utter extinction, or the burial of them, wholly under-ground, (as it were,) as hoping that this notion given out of their resurrection, after three years and a half, may prove true, as the disciples hoped of Christ's resurrection all the while that he lay in the grave.

And whereas it may be thought, that because the Holy Ghost singleth out this one last killing, and instanceth in it alone, above all those other that have foregone it throughout the beast's whole reign,—although he hath made many wars against and slaughters of the witnesses in former times,—that therefore this should be the worst and sharpest; their answer hereunto is, that this killing of them here is thus particularly and alone mentioned in another respect,—namely, as it is the signal of the Pope's ruin,—and so that this argues not the soreness of this their last killing above any foregoing. This is that which useth to be said for this opinion. But, for my part, I think it cannot be denied but that—

1. This lying dead here of these witnesses must needs be metaphorically meant, and understood of such a civil death, and of a suppression of them and their cause, and, *as they are witnesses*, to be so put down and extinguished, that they for a time remain as men laid forth by the walls for dead, and as men in whose testimony there is in appearance no life, or likelihood of a revival, their enemies having now got such a power over them. This is certainly made the great matter of their enemies' rejoicing: that as the Pharisees thought they had Christ sure enough when they got him condemned and crucified, and had him in the grave; so these their enemies shall think they have the witnesses down sure enough for ever, so great, desperate, and helpless in all view will the suppression of the witnesses by these their enemies be. And this was principally intended in their being said to lie dead; and, oppositely, the revival of them and their cause is set forth by a resurrection from the dead.

And to this purpose there may be something in that phrase in Daniel, when the angel, speaking, as I take it, of this last war of the beast, says, 'He shall accomplish to scatter the power of the holy people;' as noting out rather the dissolving their power as witnesses, than killing them as men. So that whatever proceedings the power of their enemies may reach unto, further to kill or martyr the natural bodies of these witnesses; yet this is the thing eminently held forth in this metaphorical expression, and therein eminently intended, that the cause and testimony of these witnesses should be as desperate and hopeless, without any appearance of life. And the Holy Ghost would have us take notice that their enemies' prevailing should so far reach.

2. But yet withal, in the second place, I am notwithstanding afraid, lest that so great a victory over them, and the suppression of them as witnesses, should also be followed with great effusion of blood, and with martyring many of them. And although this their lying dead and rising again be metaphorically meant and intended to set out the desperateness of their cause and testimony, and so to illustrate that glorious revival of theirs afterward; yet

those other foregoing words, 'He shall make war against them, overcome them, and kill them,' may import further proceedings, by which they got this complete victory. I confess I am afraid of those many metaphors; lest this same killing mentioned after overcoming should not be meant really and properly of some further cruelty in enemies so malicious, when they have got the power in their own hands. For if the intent of that word *killing* were to express their suppression only as witnesses, that word *overcoming* had then been sufficient to import it. Sure I am, in the 13th chapter,—where the rage and utmost cruelty which the beast should at any time, through his whole reign, exercise against the saints, is so prophesied of,—all that cruelty of their enemies, which proceeded to so great slaughters of them, is expressed in the same words that here, 'And it was given him to *make war* against the saints, and to *overcome* them,' ver. 7. And yet under those two expressions—whereas here are three, *killing* being added—are contained all those bloody executions and butcherings of the saints, by martyrdom and death, which afterwards, in the 10th verse of that chapter, is more fully expressed, when it is said, 'He that kills with the sword must be killed by the sword;' as shewing the cause and manner of the beast's bloody fall and ruin in the end, and what it is that should provoke God and man unto it, even their butchering of the saints.

And although Antichrist's power is in general there set out, as it should be in his height and ruff, and during the whole time of his reign, as getting power over all nations, tongues, and kindreds, and here only his last particular war against the witnesses is described, which should immediately forego his ruin; yet it follows not that this expression here should not be of the same nature and kind, and import the same cruelty and manner of prevailing, that is there intended. For notwithstanding that the issue of the last particular war is the fatal and utter ruin of the beast, yet that hinders not but that he may first recover again the like power, and exercise the like cruelty over these witnesses for this small space, which he had done in former ages, when he obtained power so long to continue over them. Yea, it may be feared, by that dirge of her own funeral song, which herself at last makes, in the 18th chapter, ver. 7, 8, that she shall recover her ancient power again, or at least entertain certain hopes and expectations of it, through her prevailing over some, and those of the chief, of her lost kingdoms. For there you may read, that when the next day, as it were, she is to be burnt for a witch and a whore, she saith in her heart, and sings, 'I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow:' which is spoken of her present condition just before her fall; for it follows, 'therefore shall her plagues come in one day, and she shall be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord who judgeth her.' All which implies, that as her destruction should be sudden, and in the midst of her rejoicing, so that she shall have got such power and footing again, as that God's omnipotent power must be put forth in that her so sudden and unexpected ruin after all this.

There is the like intimated in that mention of the beast's recovery of his power in Dan. xi. 45, where it is added, '*yet* he shall come to his end;' as importing the greatness of that work, and the utter unlikelihood of it, now when he shall have gained his power so settledly again. That *yet* comes in there as that *yet* in the 2d Psalm does: '*Yet* I have set my king on my holy hill of Sion,' maugre all the opposition and rage of the Gentiles and Pharisees; though they have so far prevailed as to crucify him, *yet* I have set my Son as king on Sion, and raised up him and his cause again to prevail.

And I therefore incline to think, that that song of the whore, mentioned ver. 7 of the 17th chapter, is uttered by her as during this her merry time at last; when she and her friends rejoice so, and make merry during these three years and a half, ver. 10 of this 11th chapter; when suddenly after it she is to be ruined. Yea, I believe that the cruelties which upon this recovery of her power she may now at last exercise, according to her manner in former ages, may be the means to revive the memory of all her former slaughters, and so to provoke God and men, as for this her last bloodshed, to bring upon her the blood of all the prophets and martyrs before shed; even as the blood of Christ at last brought upon the Jews the blood of all from Abel, to provoke God to ruin Jerusalem. That as the ten tribes were enraged against the Benjamites, with eagerness to root them out, because of their great victory at first got over themselves; so may the Protestant party be whetted on by these fresh killings of the saints, which may revive the memory of all the former, otherwise apt to be forgotten, to do execution upon these their enemies without all mercy. And so shall be fulfilled what is said, chap. xiii., 'He that killeth with the sword must be killed by the sword.' They shall reward her as she had rewarded them just before, as chap. xvii. 6.

And whereas it is alleged, that this being but one particular war against the witnesses, why should it be alone mentioned at last as some way peculiar, if it were such as Antichrist had commonly made upon the saints all his former days, which are mentioned chap. xiii.? The angel would not have recorded it thus alone by itself, if it had not been a different war from those former ones which the beast made against these witnesses.

The answer is, that it follows not that this is not such a kind of war and prevailing as formerly Antichrist had. For this, though such as the former, is thus particularly and alone mentioned, merely for this respect, because it is the last of them all, and so as a signal to shew the time of Antichrist's ending, and to make known the wonderful dealing of God, both with his church and with his enemies; that after so great a victory by it obtained against the beast, he should notwithstanding thus prevail over it again, and have power to do for this space of time, even as in former ages; when thinking himself as secure as ever, that then he should for ever be overthrown: the wonder of this deserved to be made a sign, and that this war of all other should particularly be instanced in.

Then again, add to this, that it is that last, great, and eminent suffering of the church,—namely, of the European churches,—and therefore it, of all others, may be ordained to be the sorest. These witnesses do now die to rise, and so to die no more, as Christ did not after his resurrection, Rom. vi. 9, but to enter into their glory, as Christ also did. I have observed that those last afflictions, which are the immediate forerunners of the greatest happiness and good, are still the sharpest. So it was with Christ himself; so with all Christians in their last conflict with death, the king of fears, who yet is the porter to let them into heaven; and so it is with the church in her persecutions. The Egyptian bondage was sorest at the last. 'And,' says Paul, 'God hath set forth us apostles last, as it were appointed unto death,' 1 Cor. iv. 9, alluding to those gladiators or fencers in the Roman games, the last of whom, there being three sorts that used to come upon the stage, were appointed not to go off, but to fight it out till they were killed, they being ordinarily either slaves or else malefactors. The greatest persecution that ever the church had under heathenish Rome was that last one under Dioclesian, and the fifth seal. And therefore all the former martyrdoms of the saints

by that state, during the times of the former seals, do, with a general cry of their blood, come but then in, when as that the cruellest of all the former was come. And yet that was not the last neither of those persecutions that the church ever was to have; for it is there told those saints that they had other brethren yet to be killed. But here these witnesses are to rise and die no more; for as they died as Christ did, so they shall rise as Christ did.

Yea, and further; you may observe, that this is now mentioned not only alone, and above all other conquests over the saints, but also as the very epitome of all their former sufferings during the whole time of the witnesses' prophecy. And therefore in the very time of the duration hereof—namely, three days and a half—it is set forth as bearing the proportion of a compendium of the whole time of their prophesying and suffering, which was for three years and a half, or 1260 days. As in like manner Christ's sufferings, unto which the allusion here is, were all summed up in his death, which is therefore put for all his sufferings. When therefore it came to a 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' then he was heard and delivered from what he feared. And so in this last brunt of the church, when you shall hear the like voice uttered by it, know then that delivery is near.

We may also further consider, that now the beast hath been so chafed by these witnesses' prophesying, and hath had so many vials emptied upon him and his company, they will thereby be so enraged, when once they shall get the victory and power into their hands, that surely 'in their rage they will be cruel,' as was said of Reuben. And the angel in Daniel, chap. xi. 44, expressly attributes this his last invasion of the churches unto his rage for their opposing him by this northern reformation, which in these kingdoms hath been the occasion of it. 'Therefore,' says he, 'he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.' So that nothing but blood and cruelty will be in their hearts. And therefore if God restrain not their spirits, or cut them short by an almighty work of his power, this last must needs come to be far the sorest of all former persecutions.

Add unto this, that in chap. xvii. 6 the whore, the city of Rome, is presented as she shall be just before her ruin; and this, as 'drunk with the blood of the saints.' Which unto me seems to argue, that drunkenness now at last shall be added to that her thirst of blood, which, by her being scorched with fire by these witnesses, hath been increased. I know it may be said that it is spoken of her in her relation to her former bloody martyrisings of the saints. But that vision being made of her as just before her fall, (for, ver. 1, John says, that 'one of the seven angels of the vials'—and as it is conjectured by interpreters, the fifth, because he it is that pours out his vial upon the seat of the beast, the whore—'shewed him the judgment of the great whore, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication,' &c., that is, in so many ages fore-passed; so that he presented her in her old and last days,) and that then she appears so drunk, makes me fear that it is by reason she was new come out from her cups of blood; and that now at last (after these * years for her to sleep in) some fresh cup, some new draught, shall make her tipsy again, that so she may be surprised *somno vinoque sepulta*, buried in sleep and drunkenness, as Babylon was; which will be the greater judgment and confusion unto her.

But yet, whether it shall be thus or no, I dare not nor cannot certainly and peremptorily determine. For on the other side, how God may 'restrain

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their wrath, and cut short their spirits,' as the Psalmist speaks, we know not. Yea, notwithstanding all their rage, malice, and spirit of revenge, yet how far their own wisdom and policy may move them of themselves to forbear the full execution of that vigour which their power gives them opportunity of, we know not. For when their victory is gotten, they may use it more moderately; especially in a respect to that Protestant party, which, though outwardly overcome by them, yet they cannot but in their hearts and consciences continue firm unto the cause of these witnesses. The light of the gospel hath took such a deep impression on men's spirits, as it cannot be extinguished, nor they be brought so suddenly to embrace Popery as the truth. And as the Pharisees, 'for fear of the people,' forbore many attempts against Christ, so may these for fear of these tongues, kindreds, and nations here mentioned, which are in heart inclined to the Protestant cause, forbear the extremity of their rage, though for the present they have the power; especially considering that they may wait for, and promise to themselves, some after age and time when their power shall more perfectly be recovered and settled, and men's consciences quieted in Popish ways, and when the adverse Protestant party shall be brought low and diminished. And so they may come to forbear and defer their full revenge so long, until this limited and short time of their full power, namely, their three years and a half, be expired, and out of date sooner than they dreamed of. Which may prevent and hinder the execution of their cruel intentions to 'destroy and utterly make away many.'

And we have experience of the wisdom of this generation of men, who love easy and gradual conquests. And their own experience hath and doth teach them that the martyring and butchering of the saints hath still advanced the cause of the Protestant religion, and branded theirs with blood and cruelty, as a mark of the false and whorish church. And though they be full of malice, which puts them on to use the utmost extremity, yet their wisdom, having some further mischievous end, may keep down the rage of that their malice, even as in Julian the Apostate, who sinned against the Holy Ghost, it did. For he seeing that martyrdoms did tend rather to add unto and increase the church than to diminish it, and knowing that martyrdom would procure to those that suffered it a fairer crown of glory, out of envy, therefore, and a witty malice, he would make no edicts for the killing of the Christians, but rather used ways of subtlety, by laying snares and temptations to draw men from the truth, and to shipwreck their consciences; and so with his profane hands to paddle in the blood of their souls—a sweeter victory to him—rather than of their bodies, and to triumph over them in their falls from the truth, rather than in their deaths. And to that end he invented another way to mischief and diminish them, by denying them schools of learning and the use of books, and suffered none of the Christians to bear any office, either in war or peace.

Moreover, there may be insinuated some mitigation of this rage of these Gentiles in the pursuing this their last victory, in that which follows the before-cited place in Daniel; where although it be said that he shall go forth in such fury and rage, and with an intent to root out many, yet all his prevailing is in the issue and success expressed but by this, that 'he shall plant his tabernacle upon the glorious holy mountain.' Which may imply, that although his intention is utterly to destroy, yet for the execution of it no more shall be done than getting a possession again in the church, and a planting his tabernacle, his power and throne, therein; which

is therefore called a tabernacle, because it must presently be pulled down again.

The event only must declare how far this prevailing shall succeed. In the meantime, we have cause to fear, and to prepare for, the worst; both from the sins of the witnesses in yielding too far unto the superstitious of Rome, and in suffering some of those superstitions to be left in their churches, by the overflowing of the Romish sea, as we see much filth useth to be left on the shore by the overflowing of the ocean, and from many other sins of theirs, as carnal-gospelling, worldly-mindedness, &c., and also from their base yielding up the outward court, and deserting the cause. For, as the angel in Daniel says, many among them shall do wickedly.

Now to conclude this point. That whereto my last and utmost thoughts and hopes concerning this matter do chiefly incline and sway me is, to think that it will be such a time with the church as that under Julian was; and that haply that persecution of his was a kind of type of this: that being the last prevailing of heathenism, as this of Popery. Julian abstained from extremity of cruelty, in respect of blood, especially at the first; but having the power in his hands, he endeavoured, by crafty means, to undo and extinguish religion, by denying the Christians the use of schools of literature, and books, &c., as I before told you; and rather shewed his malice in flouting and jeering of them than in killing them; and studied snares for their consciences, setting up his own image, with the idols of the heathen gods round about it, in the Forum or market-place: that so in doing reverence to his image, they might seem to reverence the gods; and refusing to bow towards these false gods, they might be accused as denying reverence to the emperor. Which course, in the end, was the cause of much bloodshed, though by no public edict of his made, as formerly by other emperors. And the people knowing his hate unto the Christians, they fell upon them in divers parts of the empire, and persecuted them even unto death.

Now for this prevailing to come, I think that through many temptations and snares laid, together with cruelties inflicted, it may prove worse than death and martyrdom itself. And it may perhaps be eminently rather an hour of temptation and trial, than of the blackness and darkness of martyrdom unto the generality of believers, though haply accompanied with the martyrdom of many; and therefore the Gentiles are also said to kill these witnesses. These times are like to be (as Paul to Timothy hath it, 2 Epist. iii. 1) καιροὶ χαλεποί, difficult times, rather than bloody times, the apostle there speaking of the *last* days, as in his first epistle, chap. iv. 1, he speaks of the *latter* days of Popery. And these are called difficult times, because of the cunning and subtlety that shall be used to ensnare men, and the temptations laid for them; and yet they may be stained with much blood also.

Yet so as however this we may be sure of, that many shall survive this war, and only be made white and tried, (as it is in Daniel.) Which is the rather to be hoped, because so sudden a resurrection of so great a multitude, as chap. xix. 1 are mentioned, who shall possess that glorious state of a church described in that chapter, ver. 1–10, after that three years and a half once ended, is not likely to arise merely out of a succession of new converts; but is probably to be made up of the same persons surviving and outriding that great storm.

SECTION VI.

Of that concomitant of the witnesses' killing: the nations seeing their dead bodies, and not suffering them to be put in graves.—Several senses given

of it: whether taken as an office of favour or an injury; and whether to be understood of friends or enemies, discussed.

Now for that particular clause that follows, that 'those of the nations, tongues, and kindreds, should see their dead bodies lie, and not suffer them to be put in graves,' which is interpreted in a way of favour to the witnesses; although I think their lying dead to be meant in a metaphorical and allusive sense, yet it is exceedingly doubtful unto me whether or no this clause be not to be taken *in malam partem*, in the worser sense, as rather expressing inhumanity by this metaphor than kindness and love. And this seems to me to be the meaning of it, whether those of the nations, tongues, and kindreds, be taken for friends or for enemies; and so to have been here added further to represent unto us the extreme misery and desperate calamity into which these witnesses shall be brought, in this their time of trial.

1. If these nations, &c., be meant of enemies, this phrase, 'they saw, and suffered not,' &c., doth imply their feeding their eyes with this sight, and making it a spectacle of delight and joy unto them. For to see or view a thing, when the sights are of this nature, is in such a sense used in Scripture, and implies that the thing seen is made a spectacle and gazingstock; and in the seers and beholders it imports derision and triumph. Thus in Christ's sufferings, unto which the allusion is, they are said to come out to 'see him and to mock at him.' And, Psalm xxii. 8, 'All they that see me do mock at me,' says the prophet there in Christ's name. And in the 109th Psalm, ver. 25, 'They saw me,' says Christ there,—for of him is that psalm made,—'and shaked their heads,' &c.

And thus seeing is usually mentioned in this sense, when any judgment is executed, to shew how the opposite party comes forth, and sees it, and rejoiceth at it. Thus when judgments are executed on the wicked, 'the righteous shall see and laugh at him,' Psalm lii. 6. So, Isa. lxvi. 24, 'They shall look upon the carcases of them that have transgressed against God; which shall become an abhorring unto all flesh.'

And so that other phrase that follows, 'and they shall not suffer them to be put in graves,' may also import a height of inhumanity. For, Psalm lxxix. 3, when that like miserable desolation of the temple, and slaughter of the saints, be it either that of Antiochus, the type of this, as some think it meant, or that of the Babylonish captivity, as others, this aggravation is there added unto their slaughter, that 'there was none to bury them.' Yea, and that here it should rather be taken in such a bad sense, appears by this, that their killing being an allusion unto Christ's passion, this circumstance is therefore mentioned, as heightening the suffering of the witnesses above that of Christ's, in this respect. For though his lying in the grave, as endured by him, is accounted a part of his humiliation, yet it is noted as a work of humanity in Pilate, to suffer his body to be taken down from the cross, and laid in a grave; and especially in Joseph of Arimathea, who begged it to that end, and afterward honourably entombed it. This was an office of the greatest charity, and therefore recorded; which this prophecy notes out as that which should be wanting in these nations and tongues here, whether they be friends or enemies. And—

2. If they be taken for friends unto these witnesses, and as such among those nations, tongues, and kindreds as are in heart of the same religion with them, and who do in heart respect and love them, as the people did Christ; the query then will be, Whether this their not suffering them to be buried be a friendly office? I confess, indeed, they seem to be some distinct company from those their enemies, who do so rejoice over them, ver. 14, and

some special company also of the nations, and tongues, and kindreds. For it is not said that *all* nations, kindreds, and tongues, &c., as in the 13th chapter, when Popery was in its first height undiscovered, it is said that Antichrist had power over *all* nations and tongues, &c. Nor is it said *the* nations, &c., but *they* of the nations, or *some* of the nations,—*ἐκ τῶν λαῶν καὶ φυλῶν καὶ γλωσσῶν καὶ ἐθνῶν*, &c.,—and not *all* in those kindreds, and peoples, and nations, among whom these witnesses are. And so the phrase of speech serves fitly to note out a contradistinct, special party or company; even the Protestant party, who are not in all nations; neither are they all universally Protestants in those nations where the gospel is preached and professed. But only some nations are Protestants, and but some in and of those nations. And so the mention of them here may come in to shew what part they should play in this tragedy.

For this killing the witnesses falling out in an age when so many among the nations do in heart still continue of the same religion with the witnesses, the inquiry would be, What will they do? Will they endure it when it shall come to such extremity? Will they not put to their hand to help the witnesses of their own religion? No, says the angel here; 'they shall see their dead bodies, and not suffer them to be put in graves.'

1. It is said, 'They shall see their dead bodies lie in the street,' or public market-place, as the word may also signify. Which their so public lying in such a place notes out the greatest scorn put upon them by their enemies that may be. And yet these behold them as friends that have no heart to help them, and so will not once stir to relieve them, but like standers-by and mere lookers-on are shy, and list not to intermeddle in their killing, one way nor other. They stand aloof off, as men use to do from malefactors executed, although they be friends and well-willers to them; or as men that pass by and go on the other side of the street, when they see a dead carcase lying before them. Thus the phrase *seeing them* is also used in Scripture, and particularly in this book. For thus when the wheel is turned about, and after this Rome's turn comes to be burnt, her friends, 'the kings of the earth,' that shall in heart still cleave unto her, are described as standers aloof off, and spectators that '*see* her smoke,' as Abraham did the smoke of Sodom, so chap. xviii. 9, 10, 18. And thus, it may be, those of the peoples, kindreds, tongues, and nations who have taken part with these witnesses formerly, shall now not dare to do it, but stand afar off, as it were, and pass by and see them killed, and not have hearts to help them. This the phrase *seeing them* may import.

Or further, it may be said, that those of the peoples, kindreds, &c., should see them, in that these witnesses should be driven out among those peoples, nations, &c., and should fly unto them for refuge and help.

2. And so, in the second place, that which follows may come in as a further degree of inhumanity, which these, their false friends, should shew to them, which shall be added unto the indignities put upon them by their enemies, so to make the calamity and distress of these witnesses the more complete; namely, that these, their friends of the Protestant party, should be so far overcome and prevailed upon by the power and dread of the Papists, that they shall deny these witnesses all help and shelter which they shall seek for, and all those common offices of friendship and humanity which might be expected from them. Those that are friends use to bury the dead bodies of those whose lives they could not rescue out of the hands of their common enemies; but these here shall be so far from helping the witnesses, that they 'shall not suffer them to be buried' among them, or 'to be laid in graves,

which are here metaphorically put for resting-places, where they might be sheltered from the shame, contempt, and indignities imposed on them by their insulting enemies, who now were complete victors over them.

And thus the allusion herein may be unto the sufferings of Christ, who, though he had a great party of the people for him, crying, 'Hosanna in the highest!' yet those very Jews were so far prevailed upon by the Pharisees, when they once had Christ down in their power, as to cry with the rest, 'Crucify him, crucify him!' and to run out in troops to see him executed. So Luke xxiii. 35: 'The people,' says the Evangelist, 'stood beholding him; and the rulers also with them derided him.' The people that before had rejoiced in his ministry now take part with the Pharisees, his enemies. And even so, it is to be feared, shall the Protestant party, overawed with the power and tyranny of Rome, which shall have power to tread down them also, comply with her against the witnesses; though not so far as to have their hands in their blood, yet so far as not to suffer them to be put in graves, and to be harboured amongst them or by them; so far as thus negatively to be against the witnesses, as not to shew any office of kindness in relieving them.

And so this their inhumanity is, after the manner of men, (who use to perform this as a common office of humanity, to put dead men's bodies into graves,) expressed unto us by this contrary carriage of theirs, that they suffered not their bodies to be put in graves: a metaphorical speech it is.

And particularly; the allusion here is made unto the putting the carcases of dead men into graves; which, you know, is an honour and a shelter to them, and, indeed, all the office of kindness that lies in the power of friends to afford them. And so kindness unto men in that dead condition is by this here fitly expressed. Now therefore, when these witnesses are deposed from their station, and haply banished from forth the nation in which they lived, which haply is their death here meant, and cast forth with the highest contempt, and persecuted with the greatest malice of their enemies; and shall come to those of other peoples, nations, and tongues, who are of their own religion and party, for succour and shelter from these indignities, and base usages from their enemies, so to find rest to themselves,—who are now, in respect of that active life of witnessing by prophecy, laid by the walls speechless, and as dead,—and to have only a harbour among them, (which unto those that are among strangers of another language, is but of the nature of a grave,) and a place of rest, where, at best, they cannot so much be said to live, as to lie still in quiet, as men dead;—when they shall seek but thus much, and shall not obtain it, these nations and kindreds who refuse it them may justly be said not to suffer their dead bodies to be laid in graves. Which yet to perform for them were but a common favour of humanity, and, by the law of nations, to be imparted unto banished strangers, especially to those of their own religion.

And we see it hath hitherto been allowed the witnesses flying out of England, by the Low Countries; and to the Protestants flying out of Germany, by the English. And so, in Queen Mary's days, the English professors found graves at least, some at Geneva, some in Germany, and others elsewhere; where they lay quietly enjoying their consciences, though put by that active life of prophesying which before that they lived in and enjoyed in King Edward's reign. But now such shall be the surpassing misery of these three last years and a half, above what in former times, and so potent the prevalency of the Popish faction, and such their vigilancy to stop all holes of refuge against these witnesses, that they seeking only for graves among these

states of their own party and religion, which formerly they had permitted them, shall yet be refused it by these nations, tongues, and kindreds, who shall so inhumanly be carried on against their own principles, as not to suffer them to have such graves among them; namely, a condition of harbour, rest, and quiet.

And further; because this shall be done with a prohibition to the contrary, therefore it is thus expressed, that 'they *suffered* not their dead bodies to be laid in graves;' that is, by edicts prohibiting any of the banished witnesses to have harbour among them. And although this phrase, putting their dead bodies in graves, may seem improper to express oppressed men's flying for shelter, because to be put in a grave is a passive phrase in respect of them that are dead, and imports a thing done by others; we must therefore still remember that this is a metaphorical speech, and so a civil death, and civilly lying dead, are here to be understood. For these witnesses, many of them, are not to be killed with a death natural, as they are men, but with a civil death, as they are witnesses; and so may seek for shelter as men when they are dead as witnesses, which shelter in this allusion is called a grave. And because dead men cannot bury themselves, therefore, according to the metaphor of men dead, the Holy Ghost expresseth their seeking a place of rest by their being put into graves; so passively expressing it. For how else, speaking of them under the notion of dead men, could it be expressed? It is but τὸ πρέπον *figuræ*; the decorum of following the metaphor taken up required this, and no other kind of expression. The like unto which is usual in Scripture phrase, and in all other languages. Which putting the witnesses into graves, in this sense taken, these their friends shall yet not suffer or permit.

And thus, as it may be mentioned, to note out the inhumanity and cowardice of their friends; so withal, the great misery and desperate calamity of the church in this their last being subdued: which will prove worse than ever any before it, in that now they shall have no sanctuary, no safe retiring place to rest in throughout all Europe, which shall in this respect universally become the jurisdiction of the great city; so some interpret that word πλατεία, street. It shall not now be, as at other times it hath been, that 'when they were persecuted in one city, they might flee to another,' and there have quiet and safety. But the jurisdiction of the Popish party shall so far now prevail in Protestant states, if any such remain, as they shall not dare to receive and protect the oppressed witnesses, seeking a refuge and a harbour amongst them, but shall rather prohibit them so doing. Which in this allusion is spoken in opposition unto that humanity and charity in Joseph of Arimathea, who honourably laid Christ's body in a grave, when yet he had not power to hinder his crucifying.

And that even the Protestant party may turn thus inhuman towards the witnesses, the unfaithful carriage of many Protestant states towards their neighbours and brethren, now whilst this war is but begun against the witnesses, may give us cause to fear and suspect.

How hath the Lutheran party in Germany complied and took part with the Popish for the ruin of the Calvinists? And it were happy for other states, professing the Calvin religion, if they could wash their hands of the blood of the churches, not only not assisted, but even betrayed by them.

Thus I have proposed another different interpretation from that formerly given, by way of mitigation of this extremity; yet leaving both it and the other unto the event to determine, and to the reader to judge of.

SECTION VII.

Of the universality of this slaughter.—Whether reaching to all churches reformed, and in them to all professors, or only to eminent witnesses.—That some one may be more eminently designed.—What is meant by the street of the city, &c.

III. The next query may be concerning the generality or universality of the extent of this slaughter: how far it may reach; as—

1. Whether to all sorts of professors of religion, or whether to eminent persons in the church only?

Now for that, it may seem principally to be of witnesses; that is, those that are eminently such. It is probable that the purest and best professors will be singled out to a duel or single combat, as it were. The Gentiles before this had the outward court of carnal professors more easily given up unto them; but among these truly godly ones, they find serious and stiff opposers, that will never be brought to yield unto them. And this the Popish party themselves do both see and find—namely, that the godly of the Protestants are their only real enemies, and those who still put the great bars and impeachments to their plots, and that are the great stakes in the hedge of the church, which stand in the gap against their irruptions. And these are they who only by their lives and profession do torment the ungodly, as you have it, ver. 10; who therefore rejoice for their victory over them. And therefore this is not like to be a massacre of all sorts of professors at large, as was that in Paris, anno 1572; but a particular combat and set battle against the sincere witnesses only, whom their enemies have been taught to know and distinguish from others, by the fire they have shot into their consciences, as ver. 5. Thus in Antiochus's three years and a half, the type of this, the persecution fell especially upon those that were teachers and instructors of others; so Dan. xi. 35. And thus will this do.

Only let me add this: that these witnesses being the golden candlesticks also, as may seem by ver. 4, therefore a scattering of them—namely, of the purer churches—will be joined with it. And if their olive-trees be felled and removed, if their prophets and rulers be scattered, themselves then must needs be scattered. 'Smite the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered,' as Christ spake of himself and his disciples; which smiting of his there—namely, at his passion—is here alluded unto.

2. But a second query may be. Whether this killing will be over all the reformed churches, and so generally of the witnesses in all Protestant states and kingdoms? Graserus, a judicious Lutheran divine, thinks that it will be universal, and that this is the angel's very scope here, thus particularly to design out this last killing, as herein differing from all other former ones, that it should at once be a general and total eclipse of true churches for three years and a half. And so, says he, *quod hactenus per partes impleri nunquam desiit, jam plenariè et universaliter perficietur*; that is, that persecution which in some place or other hath never ceased, and so by parts hath been fulfilled at several times, that shall now at once more fully and universally be accomplished. And I must confess, that the treading down the outward court, and the sins of all churches, so great and so general in all, do universally threaten this. And it may be part of the drift of that speech which we have explained, that 'those of the peoples, kindreds, tongues, and nations, should see their dead bodies lie in the street,' or jurisdiction, 'of the great city;' as importing, that generally, in all those nations where witnesses

are to be found, they shall be killed; and so, by that means, they should all have opportunity to view and see their dead bodies.

This I deny not, but think it may be the event, more or less. Yet, however, I believe that some one kingdom or state will more eminently be made *sedes belli*, the field of this battle, the shambles of this slaughter.

And one reason hereof is, because where the witnesses rise from this their dead condition, there is an earthquake joined with it, which shakes 'the tenth part of the city;' that is, as I take it, and shall afterwards give my reason for it, one of those ten European kingdoms that have given up their power unto the beast, shall now in this slaughter begin to fall from and cease to be a part of the city, or to belong to the jurisdiction of Rome any longer, under which, for the space of these three years and a half, it had been. Now that falling away of the tenth kingdom, being joined with these witnesses' rising again, it would argue that accident of the earthquake to fall out for the especial help and furtherance of the witnesses' rising, who are in or do belong unto that kingdom, or tenth part of the city. Some one particular state or kingdom shall assist the witnesses in it in their rising and ascending into heaven; and shall revenge their slaughter by 'killing seven thousand names of men,' who were their enemies, and had been executioners of them in their fore-passed slaughter. Now, if their resurrection and ascension be in some one part of the ten kingdoms made more eminently glorious, and so the special privilege of the witnesses belonging unto that tenth part; then one would think, that the killing or slaughter of them should also be in that tenth part of the city more conspicuous than in the rest. For in this suffering, whereof Christ's passion is propounded the type, those that suffer most with him shall rise and enter into this their glory spoken of, which is to be answerably proportioned to their suffering. If, therefore, the glory that follows seems to be more peculiar to one tenth part, the suffering foregoing it would also seem to have been more peculiar to that tenth part likewise, and the main shock of the storm to have fallen there; though haply all the heavens may be covered with black, and all churches feel some drops and sprinklings of it.

It hath also somewhat moved me, that the place where they are said to lie dead is called πλατεία, *the street*, not *streets*, of the great city, as noting out some one eminent place or street of that city, or some state belonging to the jurisdiction of Rome; so comparing the jurisdiction and power of Rome through and over all Europe unto a city, and the kingdoms and states of it unto several streets. And so some one state or kingdom is this same πλατεία τῆς πόλεως, this same *street of that city*. I know what critics say, that this is *numerus singularis pro plurali—street* for *streets;* but the elegancy of the allusion seems better made up by taking it for some one place of the city, by this slaughter made the market-place, and, as it were, the shambles therein, more eminently than the rest of the streets.

And thus also that former interpretation of those of the peoples, kindreds, &c., they being taken as meant of the Protestant party of other nations round about; and their seeing, &c., to be their knowing and taking notice of this slaughter, as standers-by, aloof off; and their not suffering them to be put in graves, to be their prohibiting them a sanctuary and resting-place among them, when they fled unto them for help: that interpretation, I say, is made more clear by this, that the slaughter falling more eminently upon some one part or kingdom, the rest of the kingdoms and nations about it do deny them of that kingdom shelter, and a grave to hide their heads in, when from thence they flee unto them and seek it at their hands.

And if in this last combat the witnesses be singled out as the one party, and by witnesses be meant only such faithful Christians and professors as do, in respect of their godliness and sincerity, hold forth an eminent testimony and witness, above that which others of the crowd of common professors do; and so not men of learning, but of holiness and zeal, are they who are here said to be the real tormenters of these their enemies; then surely in that part of the reformed churches where such witnesses are chiefly found, who do continue eminently to hold forth such a kind of powerful testimony as holy men, (for this is a testimony of holiness, not of learning,) their forefathers, who were killed before them for the same cause, have done,—surely there especially will be the seat of this war, and the field where this combat is to be fought.

Now then, look generally over almost all the reformed churches, and how few of such witnesses, with difference from the common crowd, do appear amongst them; the fire, the heat of those godly men, their first reformers, which is the thing that should torment those enemies at last, being gone, and the light only remaining, which gives but a faint, cold, and dull testimony, and which these enemies do therefore despise. Only in the witnesses of Great Britain both the light and heat of religion have been kept up and increased; and among them only hath the profession of the power of godliness been continued, with difference from the crowd of common professors. And, according to what appears in view, more of such true witnesses, now in these last days, wherein this slaughter is to fall out, are to be found in it, and belonging unto it, than in all the reformed churches besides; and that according to the testimony which they of those churches, who in these times of scattering have come hither for refuge, have and do give.

And surely the place of this killing the witnesses must be where most witnesses are. And so that kingdom may be designed more than any other; as in which also more eminently are found those last sort of champions for the beast, who receive only the number of his name, who yet shall be the chief executioners of this last slaughter, and who are to be overcome last of all the beast's company, before the fifth vial on the seat of the beast, as chap. xvi. tells us.

Add unto this, this conjecture upon Dan. xi. 45, which chapter, from ver. 36, hath Grasernus excellently, and Mr Mede, in his *Discourse of Demons*, upon 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, applied unto the Pope, who is that king there mentioned, and whom Antiochus, whose story is contained in the former part of the chapter, typified out. But the larger interpretation and application of all, from ver. 36, I leave to be fetched from them, and shall only mention my own conjecture, as supposing their interpretation good, upon the last verses, unto the purpose in hand. It is evident that the angel's scope there is, as I find others to acknowledge, to shew the issue of the beast's last expedition against the reformed churches, after their reformation and before his end; and so to denote out this last war here prophesied of—namely, Antichrist's 'accomplishing to scatter the power of the holy people,' as before hath been at large related.

Now, when he shall go forth in this his last war, in such fury and rage, with a purpose utterly to destroy, the main event and issue of that expedition of his is made to be this, that 'he shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain: yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.'

The allusion in that phrase, 'the holy mountain,' is to that of Sion, where the temple stood; which therefore, in the usual phrase of the prophets, is often

put to express the true church, which is the mountain of the Lord. This mount, and the temple thereon, was erected in Europe by the northern reformation mentioned ver. 44, which he shall prevail against, and tread down, and place the tents of his throne upon it, or some part of it, again. This Alstedius and others acknowledge to be the meaning of the place. And so it agrees with what this angel, who came here to expound what he had told Daniel, affirms, that the outward court, now at last, was to be given up unto the Gentiles.

That which to Graserus occasioned the greatest puzzle in the interpretation of this verse, was this phrase which is added, to describe the situation of this mountain, *inter maria*, 'between the seas;' that there the Pope should at last replant his ancient throne. He stands wondering why to the mention of Mount Sion, which nakedly, says he, without this addition, had been enough, there should have been subjoined, *between the seas;* which, says he, hath puzzled all interpreters: for Sion stood not between two seas. And therefore, says he, those words must be added by way of difference and distinction from the holy mountain, by the type and name of which the angel had yet expressed the state of the church. And if his scope had been thereby to set forth the church universally throughout Europe, then the bare mention of the holy mountain, as, chap. xiv. 1, it is expressed by, had been sufficient and suitable enough unto so general a scope. But it being with this addition of difference concerning the situation, that it was *between the seas*, or *among the seas*, it therefore must more particularly design out some church or people of God, whose place and habitation is, for the situation of it, thus between the seas, and thereby singled out from the rest.

Luther, he makes it to point out Rome, which is the seat of the beast which stands in Italy, between the Adriatic and the Tirrhene seas. But his ancient seat, Rome, cannot be here meant; for, ver. 44, he is said to go forth as from that his old seat, and to plant, as noting out this to be a new gained seat, which was not the ordinary place of his residence, as Rome is.

Graserus gives a touch that Germany may be intended as that place which should again be subdued unto the Pope, as lying between the Baltic and the German Oceans, which it does but very remotely, and only the northern parts of it being bounded with and touching upon those seas.

But I rather fear that these British islands are here intended, in that they so eminently, above all other places of the churches reformed, and with difference also from all others, do stand *between the seas*, even wholly among seas,—*penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos*,—which islands likewise God hath made the eminent seat of the church in these latter days, and which 'he hath loved above all the habitations of Jacob.'

And in that the angel there calls this mountain, in a high and transcendent phrase, yet of further difference, 'the mountain of delights of holiness' or, as Junius turns it, *mons decoris sancti*, the mountain of holy comeliness it seems in some way of peculiarity from others, even in that respect also, to note out a place which for holiness should more eminently be God's delight and comely in his eyes; where he should have a most holy people, and which he should make a land of uprightness, where his majesty and glory should more eminently shine. Which place, notwithstanding, for the trial of the witnesses in it, God shall again give up unto the power of Antichrist, there to plant the tabernacle of his palace or throne, or his clergy, as Graserus reads it; even as Nebuchadnezzar did his throne at Taph-hannes, when he had conquered Egypt, as a sign of that his victory. By the conquest of which kingdoms and regaining them unto him, he shall seem so rooted in his an

cient power, that in hope of all the rest the whore shall sing, 'I am now no widow,' and that just before her fall. And yet this prevailing is but a preparation to Antichrist's ruin; for it follows there in Daniel, 'Yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.' Which notes out, as that this is to be done just before his end, so also that that regaining his power should seem so to strengthen him, that he should be, as it were, out of the danger of ruin, and as for ever secure.

But this his sudden victory is but as the planting of a tent or tabernacle in a field, not to stand past three years and a half; though that party and their abettors do in their hopes think they build for eternity. But it being of man's, not God's planting, it shall therefore come to nothing; for 'every plant which the Father plants not shall be rooted up.'

CHAPTER VII.

The rising of the witnesses, from ver. 11 *to ver.* 15 *of the* 11*th chapter.*

SECTION I.

Three things in general observed.—Christ's resurrection the pattern of this.—The proportions between their killing and rising.—This resurrection a shadow of that to come.

I COME now to their rising again, and to those events which do accompany it.

Three things in the general I observe about it:—

I. That the particular circumstances of it are like to those in Christ's resurrection and ascension: this rising of theirs being an allusion to that resurrection of his, as was before said; and Christ mystical being in these last days, when his visible kingdom approacheth, more eminently to be made conformable unto Christ personal, both in his death and resurrection, the last of his acts done on earth before that his kingdom then. Yea, and, for our comfort, although there are some evident characters of likeness to that his last passion mentioned in this their killing here, yet there are more apparent ones of a conformity unto his resurrection in this their rising again. The several particulars whereof will arise to our observation in the explication.—This but in the general.

II. That God hath so recorded the more eminent circumstances of this their resurrection, that they do, as it were, answer unto those more eminent circumstances noted in their killing; and this, as it were, a reward suited and proportioned unto the debasement in the other. For—

1. Then they are said to be killed; and now a spirit of *life* is said to come into them.

2. Then they are said to lie dead in the street; and now they are said to stand upon their feet.

3. Then these their enemies or false-hearted friends are said to see them, either as rejoicing over them, or at leastwise as not helping them; but now at their resurrection it is twice noted and indigitated that their enemies saw them, and that both when they arose and ascended; so ver. 11, 12: both which acts are done in the very face of their enemies, the more to spite and vex them. Yea, and, as Pareus observes, the Greek word for *see* is here changed; for as there it imported that they then saw them with pleasure, so here it intimates that they now behold them with horror.

4. Then their enemies rejoiced over them; but now great fear is said to fall upon their enemies who beheld them.

5. Then they were exposed to such contempt that their bodies were not suffered to be buried, which is a degree of humiliation beyond death; but now, instead of this, they have therefore a further degree of glory put upon

them beyond restoring to life. A voice calls them up to heaven; and they ascend,—that is, to a far more glorious condition than they had before. And—

6. Their enemies are now killed in their stead, as being sacrificed unto them, for their killing them before. Seven thousand of their enemies were slain, ver. 13.

And all this is but to make the parallel of their resurrection and ascension unto that of Christ the more full. For so it was in Christ; the lower he descended, the higher he ascended: Eph. iv. 9, 'Now that he ascended, what is it but that also he first descended into the lower parts of the earth?' And, as Dr Ames hath well observed, the degrees of his exaltation were answerably opposite to the degrees of his humiliation: his rising from the dead being opposed to his death; and his ascension into heaven, to his descent into the grave, and going down to hell, or into the state of death; and his sitting at God's right hand, to his remaining in the grave and in the estate of death.

III. The third thing which in general I observe is, that in this their resurrection there is a forerunning shadow of that last great victory which brings in the kingdom of Christ and of his saints for the thousand years; of the glorious beginning whereof, under the seventh trumpet ensuing, ver. 15, this is ordained to be the dawning.

But the particulars thereof I shall observe, when I have despatched the particular interpretation. It is enough now in general to have observed it.

SECTION II.

The several steps and degrees of their resurrection and ascension.

I. The first step of their resurrection is the 'entering of the spirit of life from God into them;' even as in Christ's resurrection, the coming of his soul into his body was the principle of that his future life. And such a principle this same spirit of life here imports. And so here in this allusion, it notes out their full restoring to their former state, even to that life and power which at any time before their killing they had had. This resurrection here is not to be understood of the resurrection of their natural bodies, which is not to begin till the thousand years, yet it is the resemblance and shadow of it; but it shall be a rising of the persons of these witnesses who shall survive this short storm, or of their successors standing up in their cause. That whereas they were laid as men utterly dead, during these three years and a half, in respect of any active life of prophecy; and partly, it may be, through the discouragements and base fears of their own spirits, they lay too still and quiet, like dead men, and suffered their enemies to carry it, by their not opposing them so boldly as they ought to have done: yet now, a bold and steeled resolution to lie still no longer, together with an active spirit, comes upon them, and they 'stand up upon their feet,' and make head against their enemies, and so, in that sense, are said to rise again from the dead as it were, namely, comparatively to their dejected estate during those three years and a half.

And as for those who were bodily slain by their enemies the Gentiles, during that war and slaughter, they may be said to rise in their successors, who continue to profess the same cause. For the saints are a holy nation and community; and what the next succession doth, through the prayers or sufferings of a former generation, that former generation is said to do, as Isa. lviii. 12; and so John Baptist rose up in the spirit of Elias; and when Christ

preached, they thought John was risen from the dead. And this spirit of life is said to be from God, ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ, as noting out a more than ordinary hand of God therein, and a special demonstration of his power, such as he put forth when he 'raised up Jesus Christ from the dead,' as Eph. i. 19, and Rom. i. 4. If in anything Christ was 'declared the Son of God with power,' it was in his resurrection from the dead. And such a power shall raise up these witnesses.

II. *They stand upon their feet;* that is—

1. As in their former station or state.

2. As men erect, and taking heart, their cause being just, though before condemned. And—

3. As ready to defend it, and as men able and resolved now to confront their enemies; which strikes a mighty dread into their guilty consciences. 'Great fear fell upon them that saw them;' that is, a disheartenedness and dejection of mind. Their hearts begin to sink and die at the witnesses' first beginning to live; for they see this prophecy, beyond all expectation, fulfilled: that, as Christ foretold he should rise again the third day, so it being generally foretold that these witnesses should rise after three years and a half; which they, as these Pharisees, had slighted: but now, think they, surely the ruin both of us and of our cause will follow. So the hearts of Haman's friends misgave them when they saw him begin to fall before Mordecai. And now may the church well begin to say, 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall,' and lie in the street, 'I shall arise. . . . Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her; . . . and she shall be trodden down as mire in the streets,' never to rise again; as you have it Mic. vii. 8, 10.

Or, it may be, this great fear that is here said to 'fall upon them that saw them,' is meant of those standers-by of the peoples, kindreds, tongues, and nations, that had before seen their dead bodies, but relieved them not, though they were friends unto them; upon whom therefore this great fear and reverence of God and his truth in these witnesses doth fall, so as now to take part with them, and be on their side; being moved thereunto by the marvellous spirit of life and zealous courage, which God, according to the prophecy which before run of them, did now cause to come upon them. The word θεωρεῖν implies a fixed diligent observance and intention of mind; such as, upon seeing a wonderful work of God, we use to have. They see the finger of God in this, and that makes them to fear and dread his power and majesty. For in that sense we often find in Scripture, that, upon some great and eminent deliverance, or work of an almighty and divine power put forth, fear is said to fall upon the beholders; so Jer. xxxiii. 9, and elsewhere.

III. As Christ ascended up to heaven in a cloud, so also these, being called up to heaven by a great voice from thence, saying, 'Come up hither.' Where, by heaven, the place into which they are called, is meant a condition more honourable and glorious than ever they had before, and which, comparatively to their former estate, is a heaven. For now they are about to cast off their sackcloth for ever. And again, as Christ rose to die no more, Rom. vi. 9, so shall these; they shall die no more, as men that ascend to heaven do not. And thus, as Christ said of himself, Luke xxiv. 26, 'It became him to suffer, and so to enter into his glory:' so it may be said of these. So that by heaven here is not simply meant the church, as often in this book it is,—for these that rise are of the true church already, and were so even when they lay dead,—but it is meant of their following condition, which for liberty

and honour shall be as a church in heaven, in comparison to what it was before, which was but as a church on earth.

Thus, *ascending into heaven* is used to express an obtaining of new power, freedom, and glory; as Isa. xiv. 12, 13. And this is done in recompense of that contempt which they lay in before, especially just before, when they lay dead. And indeed, as I take it, the dawning of the glory of the new heaven and new earth approaching begins first in this glorious condition, which the church, after this rising of the witnesses, shall within a while be raised up unto, and quietly enjoy, as those in heaven do, whose state is described, chap. xix., 'I saw a great multitude in heaven,' &c. Of which hereafter.—And thus much of their resurrection and ascension itself.

SECTION III.

The events that accompany their resurrection.

Now further; as there are certain events which accompanied Christ's resurrection, so the like do accompany theirs. When Christ arose, there was an earthquake, which affrighted the soldiers that watched him; and so was there here likewise, as ver. 13.

Now, to explain what is here to be understood by this earthquake:—

1. For the *time* of it; it is said to be at 'the same hour,' namely, with this their resurrection, or beginning to rise; and so may seem to be mentioned as one of the means which did make way for and facilitate this their rising, by removing the impediments of it, and, as it were, rolling the stone away, that so these witnesses might rise from under the power of their enemies; which former obtained power of theirs this earthquake doth scatter and dissolve.

Now whereas their resurrection and ascension are both together mentioned in ver. 11, 12; and then after both comes in the mention of this earthquake, ver. 13, 'There was the same hour,' &c.; yet, as I take it, this follows not that all of them—resurrection, ascension, and earthquake—were at the same time or hour together. For their resurrection and ascension are two distinct degrees of their exaltation, as in Christ they were, and therefore may not so immediately follow one after the other, as in Christ they did not, his ascension being forty days after his resurrection; and yet they are both recorded and set together, because they are things of a kind and sort, as pertaining both of them unto the exaltation of the witnesses. So that for this passage that follows, ver. 13, that 'there was an earthquake the same hour;' it may perhaps not refer to the time of both, namely, their rising and ascension, but unto the beginning of the time of their first rising, as an occurrence that fell out the same hour when this great turn began; or rather, indeed, as the way and means God first used to remove impediments for the setting free of these witnesses, and restoring them unto their former state and life.

2. For the thing itself, and the place where this earthquake shall be, and what shall be the effects of it; this is expressed in what follows: 'the tenth part of the city fell,' and 'of the names of men were slain seven thousand.' Great earthquakes have oft-times shook down cities and buildings, &c., and many men have often perished by them. And such shall be the effects of this here.

SECTION IV.

The fall of the tenth part of the city, what?—Whether thereby be meant the ruin of Rome, the fifth vial?

But the main question is, What is meant by 'the tenth part of the city, and what by 'the names of men?'

Mr Mede thinks, that by the tenth part of the city is meant Rome itself, and its ruin by the fall of that tenth part; as being that which shall fall out immediately upon, or at the same hour with, this rising and ascending of the witnesses; and so to be all one with the fifth vial. And his reason is, because this being an overthrow of the Popish party, who are the enemies of these witnesses, for the beast kills them, it must therefore be reduced to one of the vials: and to which of them but to the fifth? For four are mentioned before, in ver. 5–7, and the sixth seems to be all one with that which follows, ver. 14, when it is said, 'The second woe is past;' and then the seventh vial is all one with the seventh trumpet. And this interpretation he thus makes out:—

Rome, which now is the seat of the beast, being but the tenth part of ancient and imperial Rome, as history and chorography tells us, the scope therefore of the angel here must be, to shew how that relic of Rome, before brought to a tenth part, by the former wars and trumpets, chap. viii., ix., should now wholly and for ever be defaced and overthrown. And so, accordingly, the names of men that are said to be slain, he makes to be those dignities, (haply ecclesiastical dignities, says he,) whereby men are ranked in Italy whilst Rome stands, as cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, &c., the merchants who in Italy have enjoyed so great traffic by reason of this whore's merchandise; these are together, with the fall of the city, to be deposed, and civilly to die, as the witnesses before had done, this seat of the beast now falling into the Protestants' hands. An interpretation learned and ingenious.

But that which hath carried my thoughts to some other distinct event from this, though this ultimately may be intended, hath been the observation of that so different effect, mentioned ver. 13, as wrought upon the hearts of the remnant of those, and so of the same company with them, that are slain with the fall of the city in this earthquake; together with that other contrary effect, which the full and fatal ruin of the seat of the beast, under the fifth vial, is said to have upon the remnant of the beast's company there, as the event of that vial. Here the remnant of men that are not slain are said to be affrighted, and to give glory to the God of heaven; but there, upon the execution of that fifth vial, in the height of it, it is said, 'they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their torments and their sores, and repented them not of their deeds;' so chap. xvi. 10, 11. Now, if we interpret this their giving glory to God, here in this chapter, in the lowest and most diminishing sense that can be supposed, and as not arising to true repentance; yet at least it implies an acknowledgment of God to his praise, such as Achan made, though haply forced, and out of fear constrained; and if it be so taken, yet it is utterly opposite to blaspheming the God of heaven, which these other, feeling his hand, upon the ruin of Rome, are said to do. This remnant here, chap. xi., being such as were, through fear, drawn in to be of the Popish party, and therefore do now repent.

So that it rather seems to me to be some special occurrence, more nearly and properly belonging unto the witnesses' rising and ascension, as immedi-

ately making way unto them both, in those parts of Europe where the witnesses had chiefly been killed; where, for the helping forward their resurrection, God causeth this earthquake, and mighty commotion of the state of things and of the people's hearts. That whereas through a forced consent and yielding, the Pope's power had again been entertained by that tenth part of the city, for the killing the witnesses; they now do cast off that power, with a mighty commotion and insurrection, and so proceed to ruin the opposite party unto the witnesses, who were the instruments of that former slaughter. Of which party the remnant unslain do, as men affrighted, 'give glory unto God,' and turn back again to embrace the truth, and acknowledge God to be in these witnesses, and in their cause.

So that, although this may and shall end in the ruin of Rome, which is the highest effect of the fifth vial, for this resurrection and ascension of the witnesses are truly the preparation unto it; yet this other passage of the earthquake, &c., that here is said to be the same hour with their rising, is rather to be understood of the means, or thing, making way unto that their resurrection. So that this insurrection, or rising of the people, in the tenth part of the city, which is meant by the earthquake, is the preparation unto their resurrection, which ends in the ruin of Rome; the scope of the Holy Ghost here being to shew what did properly and peculiarly concern the rising of the witnesses, as the means to it: yet so, as still this earthquake here, and fall of the tenth part of the city, are reducible unto that fifth vial, as a degree unto it. And so that fifth vial may also be ultimately intended in this passage recorded of the witnesses' rising, as the preparation unto it. Thus in the interpretation of the vials, I shewed that there may be many sprinklings of the same vial, both long before it come to its ἀκμή and vigour, and also after; all which are, notwithstanding, to be reduced unto that vial of the kind whereof they are, or unto which they are either preparations or appendixes.

Yea, further, the word *city* being taken in a double consideration in this book,—one more strict for the city of Rome itself, another larger for the jurisdiction of that city,—as was before observed; accordingly may the tenth part, both of the one and the other, be here meant, as the one is successively to follow and fall after the other. And so both interpretations may aptly be here intended; the fall of the one being as a degree unto the fall of the other, which is the height of that fifth vial. Unto this I do the more incline, for that such a double scope and aim, in things of equivocal signification, I find the Holy Ghost oftentimes to have in his eye. So in the vials, as I before shewed; and so I believe in this passage and event. So that I exclude not that interpretation of Mr Mede's, but do only join another with it, though I think that may be mainly and ultimately intended.

SECTION V.

More particularly, that by a tenth part of the city is meant one of the ten kingdoms of Europe.—How it is said to fall.—The earthquake in it, what?—The names of men, what? and their killing.

Now to come to a more particular interpretation of this place:—

1. By *the tenth part of the city* I understand, as Mr Brightman before me, some one tenth part of Europe; which, as it all once belonged to the jurisdiction of the city of Rome, and is in this book called ten kingdoms, so now again, upon the Gentiles, or idolatrous Papists, their recovering the outward court, shall now at last, more or less, come under the jurisdiction of that

city; but especially, or at least this tenth part of it here intended, where most faithful witnesses shall be found, and where most of them shall be triumphed over and slain, shall, during these three years and a half, become a part of the city again; and so is called 'a tenth part of the city:' *city* being put here, as it often is in this book, for the extent of the jurisdiction of the city of Rome, which had these ten European kingdoms by charter allotted unto it, chap. xvii., and unto which these kingdoms are a second time to agree to give up their power. In one of which ten, or in the tenth part of the whole, the witnesses shall first begin to rise; and therein shall this earthquake accompany their resurrection. This tenth part of the city may perhaps be all one with that street of the city, mentioned ver. 8.

2. By the *earthquake* here, which is said to be a great one, is meant (as still in this book it is) a great concussion or shaking of states, politic or ecclesiastical, for of either or of both it is used. Thus under the sixth seal, the great alteration wrought in the Roman empire, when it turned from heathenism to Christianity, brought about by the power of Constantine, with the deposing those heathenish emperors, captains, &c., and altering the face of the empire's religion, is called an earthquake, chap. vi. So that the like mighty commotion, with an alteration of the face of things, (either civil or ecclesiastic,) shall fall out in a tenth part of the city, and shall accompany or usher in this rising of the witnesses. Now—

3. By and through this earthquake's falling thus out in a tenth part of the city, this tenth part of it is so shaken that it *falls*,—that is, ceaseth to be a part of the city, or to belong unto its jurisdiction any longer,—or, which is all one, falls off, as we say, from being of the number of those that give their power to the beast. Which if it prove to be any of the Protestant states that should yet again, as was said, embrace the beast's power, and come under his jurisdiction, or, in order to the bringing in again of the Pope's power, should kill these witnesses, and so thereby become a part of that city, and be reckoned as pertaining unto its jurisdiction; yet now revolting from under the power of this city, and recoiling again through this earthquake, it may truly be said to fall,—namely, *qua urbis pars est*, as it is a part of the city, which it before was, but now ceaseth so to be, it now utterly renouncing either to belong to its jurisdiction, or to be of its party any longer. And as earthquakes are from inward motions in the bowels of the earth, so this here may seem to arise from within that kingdom itself; whether through the supreme magistrate's beginning to 'hate the whore,' (as the promise is, chap. xvii.,) or the people's abominating the cruelty and contempt put upon the witnesses and their cause; their consciences having been enlightened in the truth, while themselves were trodden under, as the outward court, by these Gentiles, and so they come to shake off that yoke; and the witnesses having a spirit of life now come into them, these take heart, and join with them and their cause: whether, I say, through the working of either or both of these I cannot determine, but I think through both. For the ruin of the city, unto which this is at least the preparation, is to be effected through God's changing one of the ten kings' hearts so to 'hate the whore,' as to 'eat her flesh, and burn her with fire,' chap. xvii. And this voice speaking unto the witnesses out of heaven, Mr Mede conjectures to be that of supreme authority, with which the people also shall join; for an earthquake certainly notes out a commotion in the people and nations.

4. The effect of this earthquake, and fall of this tenth part of the city, is the *killing seven thousand of the names of men*; so it is in the original.

A phrase which, as thus joining *names* and *men* together, is not so to be found in the whole book of God. By these *names of men* are certainly denoted out those, be it interpreted of whomsoever, that had been the witnesses' enemies, and that had the great agency and hand in killing them, and in subjecting those nations unto the power of the beast.

Mr Mede conceives it to be ὀνόματα ἀνθρώπων, *names of men*, for *men of names*, according to the usual phrase of Scripture; as *riches of grace* for *rich grace*, &c.

Now, by men of names, in Scripture, is meant men of office, title, and dignity. So Num. xvi. 2, those two hundred and fifty men, who were princes of the congregation, and in Korah's conspiracy consumed, are called men of name, (so in the Hebrew,) that is, men of title and dignity.

You heard before how the last sort of enemies unto these witnesses, under the fourth vial, were set forth unto us by the type of those very opposers of Moses and Aaron, who were then the two witnesses of the Lord, as was shewn in the exposition of the 5th verse of this chapter. Now as there, in Numbers, the spiritual punishment of many of them, for their enmity against the witnesses, is noted out by that fire which then devoured them: so here a civil punishment falls upon these; for having thus killed these witnesses, themselves are to be killed, haply by being bereft of their names and titles, which are to be rooted out for ever, and condemned to perpetual forgetfulness.

This Mr Mede carries to ecclesiastical dignities under the Papacy, those *Latiales Episcopatus*, &c. And for the number seven thousand, it is an indefinite number, and put for many, as the usual manner of the Scripture is. And certainly, if these names here do prove to be ecclesiastical dignities and titles, the phrase here used fits them and is most proper for them; for they use it of themselves, and when they would in a word or two comprehend all the several ranks and orders of the hierarchical ministry, from the highest to the lowest, which for them particularly to enumerate were too tedious, they involve all in this indefinite expression, 'by what names or titles soever dignified or distinguished.'

Now, as they call their dignities *names*, so the Holy Ghost, you see, calls them *names of men*; that is, merely human, of man's institution, and not of God's. For so are most of their offices themselves, and, in a manner, the names of them all; they being not such names as the Holy Ghost teacheth us to call them by, but such as the canons and constitutions of men have imposed. And this may, indeed, be the true reason why this phrase, used nowhere else, is yet used here, now when the ruin of the Pope's creatures comes to be mentioned; as most fitly, by names of men, denoting forth that evil and error of theirs which is one true cause of their ruin. But now for civil offices and titles, for them to be of man—that is, to have their rise from men—is proper to them, and therefore they are called creations, or ordinances of men, ἀνθρωπίνη κτίσει, &c., 1 Pet. ii. 13; and this in opposition or distinction unto ecclesiastical offices. Whereas ecclesiastic offices and names should all, for the foundation of the calling and office itself, be of God, and not of men. They are of another building and constitution, although man designs the persons to them, and that, too, in a way of God's appointment. Thus this phrase, *of man*, is used of this sort of offices, and to this very purpose, in other places of Scripture. So when Paul speaks of his office of apostleship, and his being designed to it, Gal. i. 1, he useth this phrase, 'An apostle, neither *of* man, nor *by* man;' that is, My office itself is not of man's appointment, nor was I put into it by man,—that is, designed to it by man's choice.

And although that office of his was an extraordinary office, yet other ordinary ministers' offices are divine for the institution of them, and in that respect not of man, though by man (that is, the church) their persons be designed unto those offices. For Christ is Lord of these administrations or offices, as you have it, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5; and so they hold of him as truly as gifts in the same place are said to do of the Spirit, and operations of the Father. And men are no more to assume to appoint church-offices than they are able to give gifts, or to bless those gifts with operations; and when they do so, they derogate from Christ the Lord as truly as they should from the Holy Ghost, in attempting to bestow upon such as Simon Magus, who desired it, the gifts of the Spirit. No, it is God who hath set *ἐθετο*, (as you have it, ver. 28 of that chapter,) teachers, as well as apostles, in the church. Paul there reckons up ordinary officers as well as extraordinary; for the institution of the one is from God as well as the other.

Now therefore, when the Holy Ghost here speaks of those false names and titles of church-officers which Christ appointed not, he disclaims them from holding of him, but calls them names of men, as being of human creation, whereas they should be only of divine institution. And so being 'plants which God the Father planted not,' they are here said to be 'rooted out' of this one kingdom or state, where, it seems, they had been the causes and authors of all this mischief and cruelty against the witnesses; and which, through the efficacy of their working to uphold their names, had again been become the tenth part of the city, but now, by this earthquake, falls from being any longer under that jurisdiction. And together with it are all those steeples and cathedrals, and all those names and titles that belong thereto, utterly shaken down also, it being a just punishment and reward of their conspiracy against the witnesses, and agency in their killing.

SECTION VI.

What tenth part of Europe, or which of the ten kingdoms, it is most probable that this earthquake and resurrection of the witnesses shall fall out in.

Now, which of these ten kingdoms or of the ten states in Europe, and what tenth part thereof, shall first have this great privilege, as a blessed handsel to the rest that follow, is not hard to conjecture, though it be rashness peremptorily to determine; for God maketh new choice of nations and churches therein beyond the line and reach of our conjectures, and 'his ways are past finding out;' neither can the face of his former proceedings with any of the churches give us any certain and infallible designment which of them he will do most good unto.

I will therefore only cast in such conjectures as, according to the face of the sky in the churches of this present age, do seem to prognosticate where and in what parts this heaven, which the witnesses shall ascend up into, is like first to clear up in, from under these clouds, and from out of this hour of darkness to come upon the world.

1. The saints and churches belonging unto the kingdom of France God hath made a wonder unto me in all his proceedings towards them, first and last, and there would seem some great and special honour reserved for them yet at last. For it is certain that the first light of the gospel, by that first and second angels' preaching, chap. xiv., which laid the foundation of Antichrist's ruin, was out from among them, namely, those of Lyons and other places in France. And they bore and underwent the great heat of that morning of persecution, which was as great, if not greater, than any since.

And besides, the churches of France have ever since had as great a share in persecutions, yea, greater than any other churches. And though it be well-nigh five hundred years since they began first to separate from Antichrist, and they still continue a glorious church unto this day, yet they never had that great honour and privilege, which other churches have been so blessed with, as to have a supreme magistrate professing their religion; but either they have been bloody persecutors and oppressors of them, or else they have apostatised from them. May it not, therefore, be hoped and looked for, that their kings in the end should be of the number of those kings who, as you have it, chap. xvii., are to be wrought on to 'hate the whore,' and to 'burn her with fire;' and so that this voice here, which calls these witnesses, who there have ever prophesied in sackcloth, up to heaven, may proceed from one of their kings; and so, as that kingdom had the first great stroke, so now it should have the honour to have the last great stroke in the ruining of Rome? But yet—

2. If you take a view of the face of the present condition of the saints and churches in Europe, as in this last age, wherein these things are in all likelihood to be fulfilled, it presents itself, together with a prospect into the times past also, and then if you put all together, the churches and saints in Great Britain, and the islands belonging to it, have, in my thoughts and conjectures, (not swayed unto it through affection only, which may betray the judgment, but through a serious and impartial consideration and weighing of things,) more hopeful characters upon them for this glory than any of the other reformed churches; and so appear the likeliest unto me to prove the more eminent stage, both of this great slaughter, and also of the rising and ascension of the witnesses.

(1.) For the ages past, there hath been these three hundred years as glorious a succession of godly witnesses and martyrs as any other nation can produce, as you may collect out of Mr FOXE'S *Martyrology*.

(2.) For the last foregoing age, since the times of the Reformation, and for the present one, the marks of these witnesses designed to this slaughter and glory, as in the former part of this chapter you have had them laid forth, appear the liveliest, and, in a manner, only upon them of Great Britain: for—

[1.] There hath God continued the most 'faithful, and called, and chosen,' as they are called, chap. xvii. 14, who are of the Lamb's side, and who are together with him to overcome the kings that shall hate and burn the whore; and, indeed, more of them that hold forth the power of religion with difference from the world, than in all the nine kingdoms besides. And surely, where most of the witnesses are, there will be their most eminent slaughter; and where their greatest slaughter is, there will be their most glorious resurrection and ascension. For all these will certainly be commensurated and proportioned one to the other: magnitude of sufferings to multitude of witnesses; and then greatness of glory unto the greatness of sufferings. Now, that the saints in these kingdoms of Great Britain are like to be the subjects of that slaughter, and those kingdoms made the *street*, or open market-place thereof, I shewed before.

[2.] There God hath eminently stirred up men's hearts to breathe after a further and purer reformation, and measuring of the temple. And they have been put to contend for it more than all the other churches; and this, more or less, ever since the first erection of the English church at Frankfort, in Queen Mary's days. And in the contention about it, and through that bitter persecution for it, they even for this very cause having prophesied in sack-

cloth more apparently than others in other reformed churches, their spirits have increased both in spiritual light and holiness, and in practical knowledge in the ways and works of sanctification, by which the worshippers are to be measured, and also in further and clearer light about the institution and true government of a church, by which the temple and altar are to be measured, more than all the reformed churches besides have done; who, in the quiet enjoyment of much of what these contend to have in a further purity, have run out almost into nothing but an outward court of profession, and a mere form, there being few *priests*, or true worshippers, that, with difference from others, do worship God in power, in spirit, and in truth, that are to be found in the inner temple of their assemblies. And let but the exposition of the six first verses of this chapter be consulted with, and that interpretation given be but impartially applied to the Protestant professors this day in Europe, and how eminently above the rest will the condition of the saints of Great Britain, and their constant conflicts with the beast and his abettors unto this day, be found to fit the measure thereof, and to look more like, and come nearer the life of, that face of things therein presented, than any other, or than all other the reformed European churches since that their first reformation! And—

[3.] That description of those who are to be the eminent opposites of the witnesses in these last days, and the authors of this their slaughter, fits those open and professed enemies of them in those kingdoms also. And there, if anywhere, are found those that 'receive the number of the beast's name; who, notwithstanding, hitherto have, and may yet for a while, deny his 'character' and disclaim his 'name.' Whom shall we liken this generation unto, or where shall we find similitudes that will suit them, if those descriptions forepassed in this chapter suit them not? Sure I am, if these be not they, they are as like as *ovum ovo*. And these (the 'number of his name') being the beast's last champions,—as appears out of chap. xiii. 17 and chap. xv. 2, and are therefore there mentioned last,—are to hold up the last great quarrel of the beast's cause, and to fight this last combat with the witnesses; and so in this last age to be overcome in open field by them, as their predecessors that had the mark and image of the beast have been overcome by the former generation of witnesses in elder times. And—

[4.] In which of the reformed churches are these 'names of men,' who are to be the killers of the witnesses, and therefore are slain in this earthquake in their revenge, continued but in these kingdoms? And *that* in this otherwise unused phrase, 'by what names or titles soever distinguished.' Which names and titles, and several dignities,—take in all sorts of them, from the highest to the lowest,—in all those kingdoms, may haply be found to amount to 7000, that number being an indefinite kind of number, and taken for more or less, even besides such ministers of parishes and assemblies as have for the substance of their office a warrant from God, though for their usual names, whereby they are called, they retain a name of man's devising. Yea, is not this very thing made the quarrel now, whether their ranks of ministry be names of God or of men? About which the witnesses have, from the very beginning, contended. Yea, is it not the suspicion and general opinion that to continue and to secure these their names they would again introduce Popery? And is not the matter as thus stated the very ground of their quarrel? And hath it not long been the ground of all the opposition against the witnesses and saints in this kingdom,—as of silencing, fining, depriving them, and deposing them from their ministerial charges, &c.,—less that, as the Pharisees said of Christ, the people's running after the witnesses

doctrine should endanger their names, credits, and dignities, and so take away their kingdoms? Hereat the quarrel first began, and for that secret cause hath all along been continued, though under other outward pretences. Yea, this is the thing that shall provoke them to the ensnaring slaughter of these witnesses, which now approacheth. They say within their hearts, 'Let us kill' these witnesses, 'and the vineyard will be ours.'

Now, upon all these grounds, how fairly probable does it seem that these occurrences here mentioned, as those that shall attend the resurrection of the witnesses, are to fall out in this tenth part of Europe, and in one or both of these our kingdoms above-mentioned, more eminently than in any other European state or kingdom! And how just were it with God to give up these names of men, who have been the enemies of his witnesses in all times since the Reformation, to receive at last the number of the beast's name, and under his name and power to become in the end the killers of these witnesses, and his trained band, and leaders in this his last war! And how wonderful and wise a dispensation of God will it be towards his own in these kingdoms, to have reserved the utter extirpation of these names of men, though so long while contended for, unto such a time and occasion as this! And that after they shall first have done this feat and exploit for the beast, in killing the witnesses, they should then be sacrificed as Baal's priests were by Elias; even when these witnesses, whom they so persecuted, shall rise, and die no more; and so by this means, the ruin of these their enemies should be made the witnesses' triumph, and the removing them out of the way by this earthquake made the foundation of their ascension into heaven: after which the work of measuring the temple, by these Samaritans interrupted, shall go forward in the hands of Joshua and Zerubbabel; and the people, who before were afraid of these hinderers of the work, shall now begin to cry, 'Grace, grace, unto it;' and so the rearing of these purer churches shall be upon the rubbish of this Samaritan mountain, the false church.

And if the fifth vial be also aimed at in this earthquake, and the fall of Rome, the seat of the beast, as ultimately I think it is, then how comely will it be, and suitable with the long expectation of God's witnesses and holy ones, that the ruin of these episcopal 'seas,' and seats of those that shall do Antichrist such service, should fall out with, or be a preparative unto, the fall of that great bishop's *see*, as I said in expounding the fifth vial, and both to go down together, as alike pertaining to the same building of man's, not God's!

[5.] And lastly, if this prove the issue of God's dealings with these kingdoms, how gloriously shall God thereby acquit himself in the conclusion of all his dispensations towards them! For to see two such contrary streams running so strongly one against another in the same channel, hath indeed caused a wonderment in the godly-wise of this last age, what God means to do, and what end he means to make with England. This is that which is now the great expectation of the churches there, how equally God means to proceed, both towards them that fear him therein, and also towards the opposite party that are and have been there. For it is strange, even to a miracle, to see how God upholds in the same state two such contrary factions and parties: one, of his own people, rising higher and higher in spiritual light, and in opposition to superstition, and breathing after further purity of holiness and perfection of public worship; and together with this, at the same time, another strong party looking towards Rome, and increasing in superstition, darkness, and an impudent outfacing the light of truth, and that then when it shineth hottest and clearest on them. Now, for the all-

wise God, who professeth to have this art and skill, to 'preserve the righteous, and reserve the wicked unto punishment,' as Peter speaks; for him now at last to come off so gloriously, what more equal, and so more likely dispensation, than to run this course chalked out here in this chapter, both towards the one and the other party in that kingdom, and which, according to the course of his dealings throughout the Scriptures, though this prophecy had not been left us in this chapter concerning these very times, the godly-wise might have hoped God most probably might intend to take?

SECTION VII.

How this their resurrection and ascension is a forerunning shadow of the restitution of all things at the coming of Christ's kingdom.

Now further; concerning this great privilege and honour thus first befalling some one tenth part of Europe, let me add this unto all that hath been said of it, to make it appear yet the more glorious: That this resurrection of the witnesses seems to be the beginning of the first great turn of things in the church hastening to the New Jerusalem; and so the very first dawning of the kingdom of Christ approaching, and of the final restitution of the church's liberty from under the yoke of Antichrist. When Christ arose, as these witnesses here do, his disciples then asked him whether he would at that time restore Israel. He denies not that it should be done; only he tells them it was not for them then to know the seasons. But now the time of that restitution approaching, the rising of these witnesses, which beareth the true resemblance of his, is here mentioned as the signal of that restitution which, chap. xx., is called 'the first resurrection;' of which, I say, this is the forerunning shadow. And, indeed, thus have the writers of all ages since Christ understood it. For when they speak of that day, and the signs of it, you shall generally find it among the ancients that this killing of the two witnesses and their rising, though indeed it hath by them been interpreted of Enoch and Elias, are made the forerunning signs of the approach of that joyful day of Christ's kingdom, which they called the day of judgment.

And, I confess, I have thought that the true reason why this particular occurrence, though falling out but in a tenth part of Europe, is here made mention of, rather than other occurrences which are like to fall out with it or after it, as the ruin of Rome, which in itself is a greater one, is because that this one passage should have more fitness to become a sign—which to give is the scope of the Holy Ghost in this chapter—of the approaching of the New Jerusalem, to come under the seventh trumpet, than any other occurrence; it being not only the first step of the restauration of the church after Antichrist's last scattering of it,—which shall for ever after go on and increase until the full restitution of all things,—it is not only, I say, the first turn of the stream after that last low ebb, the waters whereof shall rise and increase till it be full sea and never ebb again, (these witnesses now rising, as Christ did, never to die again, but to cast off their sackcloth for ever,) but further also, in many particulars, the liveliest picture and model of that great restauration of all things which is to come, above any other passage; and so is singled out as a forerunning type and resemblance of it.

This great restoring of all things, of which we speak, is to begin with the seventh vial,—which, as was said, is all one with the seventh trumpet,—when 'old things are to be done away, and all to be made new.' Now, as then there is said to be 'a great earthquake,' and that 'such a one as never was

since men were upon the earth,' chap. xvi. 18; so here there is said to be a great earthquake also. And as the effect of that earthquake is the dividing the remainder of Babylon into three parts, and the falling of the cities of the nations, ver. 19 of that 16th chapter; so here the effect of this earthquake is the falling of a tenth part of the city, and the slaying of these names of men. And as that is ushered in with a resurrection, which, chap. xx. 5, 6, is called 'the first resurrection,'—that is, the first physical rising of the bodies of the saints,—so this also hath a resurrection (though not natural and physical, yet metaphorical) of dead witnesses unto a better life than ever they had before. So wonderful a work and change is this to be, that it shall be even as 'life from the dead,' as the apostle speaks of the conversion of the Jews.

And again, as then after that resurrection there is a new heaven and a new earth, so here there is an ascending into a heaven. So glorious shall the condition of these witnesses be, in comparison of what it was before, that it shall justly be counted a heaven, if compared with their former best condition before their killing.

Thus among the Gentiles will God give one instance, as a small scheme, type, and shadow of this his kingdom, to confirm the faith of the saints in it, and that, as is most probable, in those churches of Europe which he means chiefly to make partakers afterwards of this his New Jerusalem under the seventh trumpet.

SECTION VIII.

An interpretation of that clause, ver. 14, '*The second woe is past.*' —*A reconciling some difficulties about it.*

There remains nothing now in this chapter to be expounded, excepting this clause which follows, ver. 14, 'The second woe is past; and, behold, the third cometh quickly;' which is the close of the sixth trumpet. For the three last trumpets being called three woes, chap. viii. 13, when the fifth trumpet had done sounding, it is said, chap. ix. 12, 'One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more,' &c. And now when the sixth trumpet's time of ending comes, it is said, 'The second woe is past,' &c.; which is all one as to have said, The sixth trumpet, and the woe of it, do here determine, or at least begin to determine and end.

Now, the sixth trumpet being the empire and tyranny of the Turk, and the sixth vial being that great and deadly blow that shall be given that empire, to make way for the kingdom of the Jews, the 'kings of the east,' mentioned in that vial, hence Mr Mede interprets this passing away of the second woe to be the very sixth vial, as this fall of the tenth part of the city he makes to be the fifth vial. Which if it be so, the difficulty to me, which I see not so clearly by him reconciled, is, that this passing away of the second woe, as it is here recorded, seemeth, for the time of it, to fall out together with this resurrection and earthquake, and with the ascension of the witnesses and fall of the tenth part of the city, and all these to determine and end, as it were, in one common period. For as soon as the Holy Ghost had made the narration of all these, he concludes with this, 'The second woe is past.' And then, he making the fifth vial to be the period of the Pope's reign, and the witnesses' ceasing to prophesy in sackcloth to be at their rising, and at the fall of the tenth part of the city; how then can the passing away of the second woe, if it be the sixth vial, be imagined to fall out at the same time with these, seeing the vials, as well as the seals and trumpets, do fall out successively each after other? And though

not in equal or alike distances of time each from other, as Napier would have it, yet all of them in some distance, as is most likely; and it is certain it hath held so in all the rest.

Now, to reconcile this difficulty:—

1. Either the fifth and sixth vial shall fall out altogether about the same time; and so the conversion of the Jews and rising of the European witnesses fall out together as preparations unto them both: which I confess unto me seems not altogether improbable. For that passage in Dan. xii. 1, compared with the last verse of chap. xi., would seem to imply as much. In which last verse the angel had spoke of the end of the reign of Antichrist; and in the 1st verse of the following 12th chapter he speaks of the Jews being delivered from their greatest time of trouble, which is to befall them from the Turk upon their first conversion: and he seems there to make them both to be at the same time, or at least so near each other that the distance is not considerable. For he expressly says, 'At that time shall Michael stand up, to deliver thy people;' so he calls the Jews by way of distinction from the Gentile Christians, as being of Daniel's nation. Or else—

2. Whereas there are two things here mentioned concerning these witnesses—

(1.) Their rising, accompanied with this earthquake; and—

(2.) Their ascension into heaven, which must needs fall out after their resurrection: it may be, that as Christ's ascension was forty days after his resurrection, so this their ascension, though mentioned immediately next their resurrection, may be some space of years after, when their enemies are removed, and all obstacles and impediments out of the way; then they have a heaven granted them, and a voice calling them up thither. And so it may come to pass that this ascension of theirs may not be until the sixth vial, though their rising were before the fifth vial, and a preparation unto it. But—

3. And lastly, to solve all these doubts: it may be, that the only scope and drift of the angel in bringing in this clause, 'The second woe is past,' here, ver. 14, was not so much thereby to denote the exact common period or instant of time for all these occurrences mentioned, or to shew how the sixth vial and the end of the sixth trumpet shall, for the time of them, be together with this earthquake, &c.; but rather, whereas the Turkish tyranny was one part of the second woe upon the eastern Christians, spoken of chap. ix., and the treading down the outward court of carnal Protestants by the Papists, and killing their witnesses, another second part of that second woe, that therefore now, when he had related and put them both together, then he comes in with this speech, 'The second woe is past;' that is, I have now fully declared what a woe God will bring both on the eastern Christians, and also on the European and western Christians; and these two do complete and perfect the story of the second woe, and do also belong unto the story of the sixth trumpet. Which second woe, consisting of those two parts, I have now fully done withal; and so I pass from it to speak of the third woe, which now 'cometh quickly,' &c. And so this passage seems to be intended rather materially to shew what appertains to the sixth trumpet, than chronologically to shew the expiring of it. And so this great punishment from the Popish Gentiles upon the Protestant party in the west for their sins is fitly cast under the trumpets, and joined to that great plague and punishment on the eastern Christians by the Turk, as a part of the sixth trumpet, and severed from the vials as no part of them: they being to fall only upon the enemies themselves of both these Christian companions—

namely, upon the Pope and the Turk. Thus the Holy Ghost homogeneally putteth together the punishment of carnal Christians, both eastern and western, under the woe of the trumpets; and in like manner involveth those other two grand enemies unto the Christian profession and religion wholly under the punishments and plagues of the seven vials. And so that may be the reason, both why the story of 'treading down the outward court' and of the 'killing of the witnesses' comes in here in chap. xi., though the matter of them belongs unto the book-prophecy; and why also the 'treading the wine-press,' chap. xiv. 20, which is part of the treading the outward court in this 11th chapter, is reckoned as no part of the vials, it being to fall upon the Protestant party. Yet so as with what in the trumpets, what in the vials, God will be sure to meet with all sorts for their sins, and so, by a like just and impartial rule, proceed both towards friends and enemies, without any respect of persons.

But whether of these, or whether any of these, will reach the Holy Ghost's meaning, I leave unto the reader to judge.

I shall, by and by, add a fourth interpretation of that clause, to me as probable as any of these, when I have first cast in a few conjectures about the times of the fulfilling of these things, which I reserved to the last, as the closure and *coronis* of this long discourse: because many things already delivered in this interpretation do fall in to strengthen the conjectures concerning the precise time of the falling out of these so great occurrences.

SECTION IX.

The conclusion of this discourse.—The conjectures of some about the time when this killing and rising of the witnesses shall be.

I find two periods of time more eminently pitched upon by writers of this age, according to the diversity of men's conjectures, for great changes in the churches of Christ.

The first is fixed some time between the years 1650 and 1656.

The other upon 1666. Both which periods are not far off to come.

Concerning both of which, as also any other that shall be made upon conjectures out of these prophecies, this general caution must be taken in:—

That in these computations a mistake of a few years may fall out, and the event fall out sooner or later than the time conjectured, by reason that the vulgar account of years from the birth of Christ is uncertainly kept, according to the acknowledgment of chronologers themselves. So Arnobius, at the writing of his Apology, speaks indefinitely of the reckoning of years, how long it was from Christ unto his time: *Tricenti sunt ferme anni*, says he, *aliquid plus vel minus, a quo cœpimus esse Christiani.* And therefore the best chronologers (as Helvicus, &c.) reckon the true account to reach two years further than the vulgar account doth, and so make the year 1650 with us to be in truth 1652; and so of the rest. Others give a larger allowance, namely, of four years. And this indeed is the true reason of that difference about the first period mentioned, namely, between 1650 and 1656; some saying it shall be in '51, some in '52, and some in '56: yet all making the ground of their so fixing it one and the same, only varying about the precise time by reason of several computations and accounts of the years since Christ, as we shall see by and by. And for that second period of 1666, which is made to terminate the date of Antichrist's reign, and is to that purpose understood to be that *number* of 666 made mention of in the last verse of chap. xiii., the first that so interpreted that place was an unknown Eng-

lish writer, anno 1589, who, in a little book dedicated to the church of Rome, first gave this obscure hint of it: 'Yet,' says he, 'two months, two weeks, two days and a half, and thy number 666 shall be fulfilled,' as writing to that church. Which casting up, from 1589, the year his book bare date of, from the printing of it, I found him to aim at 1666. Now, the reason which they give for this interpretation, and why they reckon the beginning of Antichrist's 1260 years, or forty-two months, from Pope Innocent's time, anno 406, I have given upon chap. xiii. And I find Simpson, the Scotch abbreviator of the church's story, to pitch the beginning of the Pope's usurpation over churches in this man's time, who yet had no eye at all unto this interpretation of 666. And, as I remember, Mr Wood, now with God, in his manuscript upon the Revelation, doth also incline to think the year 1666 to be the time of the Pope's downfall; and so also do some others.

That other first period of 1650, or '51, or '56, I find by some to be made the time of the Jews' first call. And by others, that of 1656 to be the time of the expiring of Antichrist's reign, and the fall of the city. The first that I know of that ever pitched upon this term of years was that holy man Hiltenius, the great forerunner of Luther in Germany, and who foretold the very year of Luther's rising after him, to teach the same doctrine that he had done; which Melancthon says he saw written under his own hand. Among other of whose sayings, you shall find this as one of the last recorded in his life, written among the lives of the German divines, by Melchior Adamus: that the year after Christ 1651 shall be the time of the change of this world, and so the beginning of that new world to come. Since him, many others, though haply not from him, have fallen upon this period of 1650. So Finch, in his book of the *Calling of the Jews*, makes it the time when God will leave off, as says he, to scatter his holy people, for then shall the Turks' first declining come, &c.

And the Jews themselves have their eyes upon this very time; for it was a secret communicated to old Mr Forbes by a learned Jew, as Mr Forbes himself related it, not long before his death, that the learnedest Rabbi they had had in the world of late years did pitch upon 1650, or thereabouts, as the utmost time wherein they should expect their Messiah to reveal himself unto their nation; and how he had left this secret with some of his learned friends that came about him when he was on his deathbed to know his judgment about the Messiah.

I find also Mr Mede, in his *Clavis*, to pitch upon 1656, though tacitly and implicitly, yet clearly enough, as the time he most inclined unto for the expiration of Antichrist's kingdom. For in his *Synchronisms*, he makes the first trumpet and the Pope's 1260 days to begin together; and in his *Comment*, he makes the beginning of the first trumpet to be in the year 395. So that, if the reign of Antichrist begins at the year of Christ 395, then his 1260 days or years will end in 1655. And thus there will be so many years from Christ unto the beginning of the new world, as there was from the beginning of the old world until the days of Noah, unto which Christ compares his coming, even 1656 years.

Now the best ground for this opinion that ever I met with, and which I suppose all or most of these have gone upon, is that computation of years given to Daniel, chap. xii. 11 of his prophecy, by this very angel that gave this little book here, and this 11th chapter, by word of mouth, unto John, as was said before. Who there says, that 'from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set

up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days,' or years. The beginning of which account they fix, as I said before, in Julian's time, when was the last time both of the ceasing of the daily sacrifice by him set up, and of setting up heathenish idolatry in the world. Which years, if otherwise they be reckoned from Vespasian and Titus his son's sacking of Jerusalem, were out almost three hundred years ago. This place and account in Daniel, I suppose Hiltenius, the first that pitched on it, had in his eye for the ground of his conjecture. For he was a great studier of Daniel's prophecies, and wrote notes upon them, as in his life you may read. And sure I am that Mr Wood, Finch, and others, do make that the ground of their opinions. And I suppose that most of all these Jews also do the like. And, as was said before, the reason why some do so uncertainly pitch upon 1651, others '52, others '55, and others '56, is the variation and uncertainty of the account of years since Julian's time, when and how long he reigned: some pitching his reign in the year 361, some in 363, and others in 365.

Now I shall only shew how both these periods—namely, of 1650 or '56, and 1666—may be reconciled, and how they both may stand together.

The fifth vial, as hath been said, had two gradual accomplishments of it; whereof the one is a preparation to the other. That vial is emptied, as also are some of the others, by two several pourings forth of two several portions, the one of the top, the other of the dregs of the wrath of God; whereof this 11th chapter mentions one, and the 16th chapter the other. The first degree of it begins at the rising of the witnesses, with the fall of the tenth part of the city, as taking the word *city* for the extent of Rome's jurisdiction; which is completed by a second degree of it—namely, the ruin of the city of Rome itself, which is now but a tenth part of the ancient material city of Rome that once flourished: with the ruin of which city itself, the time of Antichrist's reign and kingdom is reckoned to end; it being the full accomplishment and complete effusion of the fifth vial. Now, according to their conjecture, the first of those forementioned periods (namely, 1650 or '56) may prove the time of the first of these two occurrences; and the second (namely, 1666) may be the time for the latter of them. That is, some time between 1650 and 1656 may be the period of the witnesses' killing and the time of their rising, and of the fall of the tenth part of the city, and the earthquake, &c.; and then 1666 may be the designed time for the ruin of Rome itself, and for the witnesses' more glorious ascension into heaven.

You heard, in the beginning of this discourse, that the angel who here gave this 11th chapter is the very same whom we find to have uttered that 12th chapter of Daniel's prophecy, in which he speaks of the end and ruin of Antichrist, chap. xi. 45, and how long his time should be, and his power last to scatter the holy people; and when he should accomplish to scatter them, and after that never hurt them more. This the angel declares, ver. 7 of chap. xii., adding withal, that at or about that time the children of Daniel's people (that is, the Jewish nation) should be called by Michael their prince, (that is, Christ,) ver. 1, and they should be delivered out of the greatest distress, also from the Turkish empire, that ever that nation was in; this you have ver. 1. After which ruin of Antichrist, and calling home of the Jews, should follow the resurrection of the saints, with which Christ's kingdom begins, ver. 2, 3.

Now here, in this 11th chapter of the Revelation, he comes and explains both what that time of Antichrist's reign is,—namely, 1260 years,—and also what that last scattering the power of the holy people by him should be;

even this very killing the witnesses, the signal of its expiring. And then, how the second woe should pass away,—namely, the Turkish tyranny,—and then, under the seventh trumpet, should come the glorious resurrection of the saints and the kingdom of Christ, which Daniel and all the prophets have so much spoken of. Daniel being inquisitive after the times when these things should thus be finished, the angel in ver. 11, 12 gives him two periods, the beginning of the time of both which is to be counted from the 'ceasing of the daily sacrifice,'—that is, as was before said, from Julian's time. Now the one of those periods is that of 1290 years, beginning from that his time, and ending between 1650 and 1656. The other is that of 1335 years, beginning from that his time also, and ending between 1690 and 1700. Which two periods, as I understand them, are set as two posts, the one at the beginning and the other at the ending of that whole stage of time which is allotted for the despatch of those great things prophesied of to fall out before the kingdom of Christ. The first (of 1290 years) is mentioned ver. 11, and shews when the first turning of the course of things for the accomplishment of all should begin. The other (of 1335 years) you have in ver. 12, shewing the time of the full and final end and complete accomplishment of all that the angel had foretold. And so that space of time between these two periods (which is forty-five years or thereabouts; for so many years the latter account, ver. 12, adds to the former, ver. 11) is allotted as the time wherein those things prophesied of by him to fall out in the last ages of the world should, each in their order, be accomplished. And so, from the first period, should begin the great turn towards the accomplishment of them, and the immediate preparations thereunto. And in the interim of that intermediate space of time between 1650 or '56 and 1700 shall follow the orderly performance of those things which are to end and consummate all before the glorious kingdom of Christ. As first, the ruin of Rome, and so the end of Antichrist's reign; and then the destruction of the Turkish empire; after which shall begin that great resurrection, even at that last period of 1335, falling out about 1700, which is the consummation of all.

Now the question is, what that occurrence should be which the first period of 1290 years, falling out between 1650 and 1656, doth point at, as then either to begin or to be ended? Whether it be then that Antichrist's time, times, and a half, which the angel had spoken of, ver. 7, should expire; or what else it is that he would have our eyes especially upon in that first period?

It seems unto me, that in the 7th verse of Dan. xii. the angel mentions these two things as distinct, though he names them together. First, for Antichrist's reign, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time. And then he adds this second thing also, as a note or sign of the expiring of that his time,—with which all those things foretold besides should begin to be accomplished,—namely, 'when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people,' as speaking of this very last and eminent killing of the witnesses; with which all their scattering should end, and for ever be accomplished. *Then*, namely from that time, shall these things begin in their order to be finished,—namely, Antichrist's ruin, and the Turkish empire's destruction, &c. For thus I understand those words, 'and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished,'—namely, these two things there prophesied of, even Antichrist's ruin and the Turk's; he mentioning this last scattering as the sign or the beginning of the finishing of all. For it is hard to think that all these things should together, and exactly at one time, be finished.

So that indeed, as it seems to me, the angel's scope in that first period of 1290 years, beginning from Julian's time, and ending between '50 and '56, is not so much to design out the end of Antichrist's time, times, and half a time, as it is to point out the first turn of things preparing to the kingdom of Christ, which shall begin from this last scattering the holy people, which is all one with this killing of the witnesses here. And so that some time within these forty-five years that are to run out between that time and the end, shall be the expiring of that his time.

And the reasons making me think that Daniel's first period of 1290 days do rather thus refer to the first turn of things towards the accomplishment of all, which is to begin with this accomplishment of the scattering of the holy people, or slaughter of the witnesses, and so that to be made the eminent occurrence that does periodise these 1290 days, are these:—

1. The angel's fixing the latter period of 1335 years for the final end of all, and his leaving forty-five years' space between, doth argue the former to be the *punctum* that begins that time allotted for the accomplishment of these things during that space. So that those forty-five years are indeed the space of time for the fulfilling those great things; whereof Antichrist's ruin is one, and a great one. And so the ending of those 1290 days is the beginning of these forty-five years, and the expiring of those 1335 years is the ending of these forty-five years, which bring in the thousand years of Christ's kingdom. For to what end should this space of forty-five years be thus set out and measured, but as to be made famous by being designed for the fulfilling of those things,—namely, the ruin of the Pope, and of the Jews' enemies, the Turks, in the interim of it,—whereof Daniel had there prophesied?

2. In the 10th verse, immediately before, he had again repeated, and a second time mentioned, this last scattering the holy people; and this as a preface to his answer about the time when it should be that all should be finished. 'Many,' says he, 'shall be made white, and tried, and purified,' &c., namely, by this their last scattering; and then he subjoins, ver. 11, 'And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away'—that is, from Julian's time—'shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days;' namely, unto the end of this last trial mentioned, even when this scattering the holy people, or killing the witnesses, shall be accomplished. He mentions it thus, on purpose to shew that he makes that killing the witnesses the *terminus ad quem* of his account. You heard before that Antiochus's three years and a half, spoken of chap. xii. 7, was the type of this three years and a half; and lo, he useth the very same phrase here of this that he had there used of that trial, chap. xi. 35: 'Many,' says he, 'shall then fall, to try them, to purge them, and to make them white.' Yea, further, I verily believe that one reason why he singleth out Julian's time as the term or moment from which he reckons, unto this last scattering the witnesses, rather than any other time from which to begin this account, is because that, for the comfort of the church, he was to pitch upon the end of the like scattering unto that of Julian's, when, as was before observed, Popery should, after the Reformation, prevail again, and the power of the beast make a scattering of the saints, before the final ruin of that power; even as heathenism, after it was purged out of the empire, was then again set up by Julian, with the killing the holy people, by the authority of a heathen emperor, before its final overthrow and extirpation. And so that scattering in Julian's time was chosen, rather than any other occurrence, as that from which the computation of this time should begin; because, through the likeness of it, it was most suitable to resemble the occurrences about this killing the witnesses, with which this time was to have end.

This being just the like time of trial as that in Julian's days was; and therefore he thus pitcheth upon that. Whereas, had he intended to reckon the Pope's time, times, and a half, and the exact ending of it, he might, and surely rather would, have reckoned from some other more eminent mark suitable unto it, that accompanied his first beginning and rise, rather than this heterogeneal passage of Julian's persecution, which yet is homogeneal with this last slaughter of the witnesses. And—

3. Unto the time of that latter period of 1335 days, ver. 12, when it shall come, he adds a 'Blessed is he that cometh,' &c.; which to me sounds as if the former period had some eminent blessedness also in the beginning or dawning of it, but yet not to be compared with this other which is to follow. And it is as if he had said, Blessed indeed is he that cometh to the end of the 1290 days, when the scattering of the saints shall be accomplished, and when they shall rise, to die no more. But blessed, and thrice blessed, is he that cometh to the other time of forty-five years more; for then begins that first and great resurrection that brings us to Christ's kingdom. And therefore he tells Daniel, 'Thou shalt stand up in thy lot,' &c., even thou as well as others, and shalt enjoy the blessedness of those times. And this speech is, in a manner, all one with that which John useth, when he speaks of the beginning of these thousand years, chap. xx. 6: 'Blessed is he that hath part in the first resurrection.' So that in the first period of 1290 years shall also begin blessed times in comparison of those foregoing; for now the scattering of the holy people by Antichrist is for ever accomplished.

Now then, the angel's scope here in this 11th chapter being to explain that speech of his in Daniel, (for this 11th chapter I take to be as a comment upon that his speech there;) and he, namely the same angel, there mentioning a scattering of the holy people, which should accomplish all, and so be the last of their persections; and making the ending of that scattering to be the beginning of that famous and to be noticed time when is to be the finishing of all those great things which are to be done ere Christ's kingdom begins and the glorious resurrection,—namely, the ruin of the Pope and Turk, the preparations unto which are to begin from the end of that scattering;—hence it is that he doth so largely insist on this last and eminent killing of the witnesses here in this chapter, and also upon this their resurrection. For this is placed as the post, or *terminus a quo*, of the race or stadium of those forty-five years wherein those other great things should in their order be accomplished.

And this resurrection and ascension of the witnesses, from under this their last scattering, (they being now to die no more, as Christ did not after he arose,) bearing, as was said, a shadow and type of the resurrection and new heavens to come at the thousand years, and so being a glimpse and scheme of the blessedness then, how fit, in this respect, was the time of this resurrection placed at the first turn of things, hastening to the bringing in that new world, and made the first *punctum* or moment beginning that forty-five years whose end shall be the great resurrection, and the thousand years of Christ's kingdom! So that (to conclude this) that interim of forty-five years is a time which begins with a resurrection, and also ends with a resurrection, and that an infinitely more glorious one; and in the middle course of which time the greatest things are accomplished, as preparations to that kingdom of Christ, that ever were done upon the earth, even the ruin both of the Pope and the Turk.

Yea, further, to make the harmony herein yet more full; this first period

of 1290 days, ending between 1650 and 1656, is made by those who have pitched upon it to be the time for the Jews' first recalling and conversion, and so of the foundation of the declining of the Turkish empire, as I shewed before. And their reason is, because the angel, in the 1st verse of this chapter, makes mention of this their call, as one thing to be accomplished also. But for this see Finch, Brightman, and others. And that may be one reason why he pitcheth on the taking away the Jews' daily sacrifice in Julian's time, as then become abominable unto God, as that eminent mark and post, as it were, at which he would begin this account; even because it was a passage that would more conspicuously occur to the Jews as a mark, in a way of oppositeness, answering that which was to fall out at the ending of this time. For their setting up the daily sacrifice in Julian's time was their last attempt to erect their temple-worship, unto which they, refusing the Messiah, unto this day do so cleave. Which attempt of theirs God from heaven shewed his hand against, by an earthquake overthrowing the foundation of the temple, then by them laid; so more fully fulfilling that prophecy of our Saviour, for not only above-ground, but even under-ground, was there not so much as one stone left upon another. And therefore, when he would hold forth unto them the time when they shall turn unto the Messiah, typified out by that temple and sacrifice, he reckons from the taking away that their daily sacrifice, which was made so remarkable unto them. And because he mentioneth the beginning of a blessed time, blessed in its beginning, both unto Jew and Gentile, of both whom the angel in that 12th of Daniel doth speak, and of the ruin of the enemies of both, which is to be completed by the New Jerusalem, as the accomplishment of all; hence, therefore, this period may also seem to respect the first call of these Jews, as being that which is the preparation unto their kingdom.

And if these two should then at that time fall out together,—namely, this famous resurrection of the European witnesses, and the conversion of the Jews,—how would this reconcile all these opinions together, and shew a further reason why that period of 1290 days was so eminently held forth unto Daniel, as that which was to be made famous by two so glorious resurrections of Jews and Gentiles at once, when the Jews' long scattering, and the witnesses among the Gentiles' last scattering, should both end together! And how harmonious were it that in one day, as it were, the foundations of the New Jerusalem to come, which is to be made up of both, should be thus laid together, and in a glorious resurrection of them both! For such is that revival which these European witnesses here have, from this their death unto life, and is so here reckoned. And such, and no less, shall be the conversion of the Jews; even no other than, as Paul speaks, Rom. xi. 15, a 'rising from the dead.' And thus should the preparations to that glorious kingdom, consisting of both, fall out together at the beginning of these forty-five years; during which interim and space of time the enemies of them both are to be removed out of the world, who only do now stand in the way, and hinder the revealing of Christ and his kingdom, as the Roman empire did the revealing of Antichrist, that man of sin, and his kingdom. And so both these typical resurrections are in the end to be swallowed up by a more real and more glorious resurrection, which shall begin that New Jerusalem and kingdom of Jesus Christ.

And thus may the resurrection of the European witnesses be, as was said, the preparation to the complete pouring out of the fifth vial in the ruining of Rome; even as, on the other side, the conversion of the Jews, which is

their resurrection, is the preparation to the ruin of the Turk, which is the sixth vial. And that the Jews shall be called before the pouring out of the sixth vial, which is said to make way for the 'kings of the east,' chap. xvi.,—that is, for the Jews coming into their own land,—hath long since been the opinion of Mr Brightman and others. And many also do hold, that that call of theirs shall begin forty-five years before the complete erection of the New Jerusalem; and so those forty-five years after that first call of theirs, ere they can obtain the full possession of their promised kingdom, do seem to answer unto those forty-five years which they spent after their coming out of Egypt, ere they got possession of their promised land of Canaan; for so long time it was ere they were settled in it, if you take their forty years in the wilderness, with the time wherein Joshua fought his battles, as himself expressly counts it, Josh. xii. 10. Which forty-five years do begin at the end of the 1290 years; and at the beginning of that time falls out the rising of the witnesses, according to the interpretation formerly given.

And now to give that other interpretation of that clause, 'The second woe is past,' which follows upon this resurrection of the witnesses here, ver. 14, which I before reserved unto this place. 'The second woe is past,' says the angel; 'behold, the third woe cometh quickly.' May there not, in this passage, be tacitly intimated, as the calling of the Jews still useth to be in this book of the Revelation, which is chiefly written for the Gentiles, the foundation of the Turks' ruin by the conversion of the Jews, as being that which was now to fall out together with the resurrection of these witnesses? For the Turkish empire being the second woe or sixth trumpet, with whose fundamental declining beginneth the Jews' call, as Finch and others write of it; why, then, may not the angel's meaning in that clause be, that now, when he had in his narration brought us to the times of the rising of the witnesses, contemporary with which the Jews' calling is to be, which is the first foundation of the second woe's declining, then to pronounce this, 'The second woe is past,' &c., that is, the foundation of the Turks' passing away and ruin is now laid, as is the ruin of Rome in the resurrection of the European witnesses? And surely, then, when the Jews are called, the woe of that Turkish tyranny may be reckoned and accounted of as past, for that the height and bitterness of it is past, although the empire itself may for a while still stand, the woe of it lying in its let and hindrance of the Christian religion, which now among the Jews shall revive in his territories. Yea, in the style of the prophets, and also of this book, when the foundation of the ruin of any state first begins to be laid, when its empire and dominion is past the meridian, and once begins to decline, it is said to be *past*, as you heard before; as when things begin but to be accomplished, they are then said to be finished. Which was the learned observation of Mr Mede upon that passage in chap. xiv., which also I have inserted in the exposition of that place there, when the second angel cried, 'Babylon is fallen,' when yet the first vial was but then begun to be poured out, and the open discovery of Antichrist made. But because at that time his declension and ruin began, he is therefore pronounced as then already *fallen*, though again, afterwards, when his destruction is completed in the ruin of the city itself, his seat, chap. xviii., the same phrase is used. Even as in the prophecy of Isaiah, (which instance Mr Mede also doth there bring,) when the Medes first revolted from the Babylonish monarchy, which was done at the time that Isaiah uttered it, he having many years before prophesied the ruin of it, yet because that revolt was the foundation of Babel's ruin, which was by those Medes, when revolted from

it, to be effected, therefore it is then said by the prophet, Isa. xxi. 9, 'Babylon is fallen,' &c. And so, say I, the meaning of the angel here is, to pronounce the second woe, or the sixth trumpet, or (which is all one) the Turkish empire, to be now past, then when the revolt of the Jews, in their conversion unto Christ, doth first begin; this their revolt being the foundation or preparation unto the passing away of this second woe, and that most truly, in the style of the prophets, in that it now begins to pass, &c. And so the angel goes on to give warning unto us of the third woe's approach, adding, 'The third cometh quickly;' that is, the seventh trumpet, or the New Jerusalem and kingdom of Christ. And both the ending of the beast's reign now shortly follows, together with the ruin of Rome, the foundation of and preparation unto which ruin is laid in the resurrection of the witnesses; and also the sixth vial, or the breaking in pieces the Turkish empire, is after that to follow, the preparation unto which is the calling of the Jews. And thus this 11th chapter of the Revelation does indeed become a complete comment on that 12th chapter of Daniel, and makes mention of all those things that are therein mentioned, as was at first observed.

Add unto all this, this small observation :—

I observed before, that God did use to fulfil prophecies, and the computations of them, over and over, in several degrees of accomplishment. For instances whereof, I gave this of the 1290 days in Daniel, and this also of these 1260 years of Antichrist's reign, as in like manner those three years and a half of the witnesses' killing, and then their rising again: whereof some gradual accomplishments are already past, at several times in Europe, within the revolution of the century of years last past. And yet I have withal proved that another far greater slaughter of them is yet to come. Now, it may be that the observation of the revolution of time in the hundred years last past, in which the former killings of the witnesses did fall out, may indigitate and put some note upon the time when this great and last slaughter in the revolution of this century of years now running on (since 1600) may fall out. That is, as those partial and smaller killings of particular witnesses fell out in anno 1547 (as did that in Germany, which ended in 1550) and in 1556, (as did that in England in the days of Queen Mary,) so accordingly about the time of the revolution of the same term of a hundred years, now running on in this next age after that, the time of this last killing of the witnesses may also be.

I have long since observed it, though not first to this particular purpose, that the revolution of a hundred years hath produced, especially in these latter days, new motions and alterations in the church, like unto those that fell out a hundred years before. To this purpose that of John Huss is remarkable, who suffering martyrdom at a stake, anno 1417, or thereabouts, *Post centum annos*, &c.,—'After a hundred years,' says he, 'you Papists shall be called to an account.' A speech so memorable among the Bohemians, that they stamped it upon their coins. And accordingly, a hundred years after, anno 1517, did Luther arise, and with him the gospel in Germany. And then again, if we descend to the revolution of the next hundred years, we shall find, and our eyes have seen it, that a hundred years after Luther, about the year 1618, began those notable changes and alterations in Germany which still go on unto this day. From which year 1618 I reckon that the war of the beast against the witnesses, and the Gentiles' treading down the outward court, did begin, and shall still go on till it end in his great slaughter of those

witnesses there. And this happened in an opposite correspondency to what fell out a hundred years before. For as, anno 1517, began Luther's preaching, and the workings towards that reformation that followed, so in anno 1618 began the like workings towards the deformation of the gospel, as I may so call it, which hath gone on with as strange a hand against the church, as that other was carried on with by God for the church. And to those I could add many other instances. So that I confess that I am in like manner suspicious of the revolution of a hundred years from those former mentioned killings of the witnesses in the century last past, lest about the hundredth year from thence should be the time of this other great and last killing of them, as yet to come, and whereof those were but gradual forerunners.

And it may be that, if England and Scotland, &c., be that tenth part of the city which is to be the eminent stage of this their killing and rising again, as hath been argued, then this period will fall upon the hundred years after that former trial of England. And let me add this, that as upon the rising of England and Scotland began that glorious harvest of blessed times, which lasted till these German wars began; so in this revolution of another hundred years after that time, according to the conjecture held forth, are like to arise unto the church like times of far greater blessedness, if that hold true, that then those forty-five years before spoken of do begin, which are allotted for the accomplishment of all.

But to put a stop unto too much curiosity in these matters: all these notions and conjectures, though as probable as any of this kind usually given, I give up to further light and second considerations, knowing that such have often failed and deceived others; and considering also that in fixing the times and seasons for God's great works of wonder, there is the greatest modesty that may be to be expressed. For if those seventy years' captivity of the Jews in Babylon were so expressly designed out by God, and are now long since expired, and yet when to begin the account of those seventy years is not agreed upon by the learnedest chronologers unto this day; how much more difficult then must it needs be to pitch the certain time of any period before the accomplishment of it?

But, however, let an indefinite warning that these things are approaching, and we within the reach of them, suffice for to move us to prepare for them, which is the only use of knowing them. It may be said of the time of these things, as it is said of the day of death, *Latet hic dies, ut observetur omnis dies;*—The day and year of the accomplishment of these great matters are hid from us, that so each day and year we may be found ready, whenever they shall come upon us, as in this age wherein we live they are likely to do. And although we may think this dismal and black hour of temptation not likely to come so soon, seeing the clouds rise not fast enough so suddenly to overcast the face of the sky with darkness, yet we are to consider that we live now in the extremity of times, when motions and alterations, being so near the centre, become quickest and speediest; and we are at the verge, and, as it were, within the whirl of that great mystery of Christ's kingdom, which will, as a gulf, swallow up all time; and so, the nearer we are unto it, the greater and more sudden changes will Christ make, now hastening to make a full end of all.

And for the Jews' call, which is conjunct with this killing and rising of the witnesses: as it depends not upon ordinary means to effect it, so there are like to be no preparations at all unto it until it comes, as there are not

for things extraordinary; but 'a nation shall bring forth in a day,' as the prophet speaks. And so, in the very year before it, there will be no more outward appearances or probabilities of it than there are now, or than there have been many hundred years since. And therefore our faith need not be put off from this, by the seeing as yet no stirrings or motions at all unto it or towards it. And the truth is, both the killing and rising of the witnesses, and also the calling of the Jews, may fall out sooner than we are aware of.

A

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

EXTRACTED OUT OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION.*

THE Book of the Revelation is a tragi-comical vision of the occurrences of the world through all times and ages; whereof this may truly be the title, 'The story of Christ's kingdom.'

Chap. iv.—The *stage* for this is set up in the 4th chapter; there being a representation of the universal church in all ages set forth, according to the exact pattern of a church visible and instituted, into which all saints on earth should be cast.

Chap. v.—Then the *prologue* follows in the 5th chapter, where is Christ's taking on him the government and kingdom, by 'taking the sealed book,' and thereby undertaking to be God's commissioner, to execute the decrees contained in this book, and to give the vision of it unto John; at which instalment of him into the kingdom, there is a song of praise sung to the Lamb, by the twenty-four elders and four beasts, who are the chorus in this show, with a triumphing assurance and expectation of what will be the happy conclusion of all, that 'we shall reign on earth with him.'

The *scene* or place where all that was acted here in these verses is the Roman empire, and the several dominions of it east and west, called *οἰκουμένη*, or the whole world.

Then begins the *story* itself to be acted at the 6th chapter. The general argument of which is: That whereas Christ's government was to be executed and seen, (1.) in 'putting down all opposite rule and power' that stands in his way, as Paul speaks, 1 Cor. vi.; and then, (2.) in a visible taking the kingdom to himself and his saints, which makes the fifth monarchy; accordingly here the story of this book *first* shews how Christ puts down all the opposite rule, and power, and dominion whatsoever, in the fourth and last foregoing Roman monarchy, in the several successions and revolutions of it, one after another, till that he hath worn them all out that were ordained to stand up in it. And these many difficulties of his coming to and obtaining

* This tract is merely a Synopsis, or Table of Contents, of the *Exposition of the Revelation*; and is therefore subjoined to it, although the two stand far apart in the original edition of the author's works.—ED.

his kingdom, do exceedingly serve to make the story of it appear glorious. Then—

Secondly, It closeth and endeth in a glorious visible kingdom which Christ on earth sets up, and possesseth peaceably with his saints, as the catastrophe of all.

More particularly, the story is this, according to the several contents of each chapter:—

Chap. vi.—Christ, when he ascends up to heaven, finds the Roman monarchy, whose room he was to possess, stretched over east and west, even over all those parts of the world where he was to seat his church and kingdom; and this wholly in the hands, and under the government and power, of one entire monarch or emperor, and under him altogether heathenish and idolatrous, and subjected wholly to Satan, set up as 'the god of this world.' Christ first sets upon the conquest of Satan's ministry and worship in it; and by the preaching the gospel, overturneth that vast empire as it was heathenish, throws down Satan from his throne and height of glory in it, and brings it into subjection and acknowledgment of him as king, chap. xii., and turns both it and emperors of it Christian in three hundred years. This is the sum of the sixth chapter of the seal-prophecy, and the twelfth chapter of the book-prophecy.

Chap. viii.—But this empire, though turned Christian in outward profession, yet having persecuted his church whilst idolatrous, and after it was Christian, when Arian; therefore, at the prayers of the martyrs slain, mentioned chap. vi. 11, and in vengeance of their blood, chap. viii. 4, he further proceeds to ruin the civil imperial power of it, the empire itself, by the trumpets in the 8th and 9th chapters. And the empire then becoming divided into two, the eastern and western empire, as they were commonly called—

1. He ruins the imperial western state and power in Europe, by the four first trumpets, the wars of the Goths, by four several steps in the 8th chapter. Then—

2. Chap. ix.—He destroys the imperial eastern state, which stood after the other, by two degrees,—first, by the Saracens, then by the Turks,—who are the fifth and sixth trumpets, who possessed all the eastern part to this day; and that is the contents of the 9th chapter. Only, chap. vii., ere ever these trumpets bring these evils on the empire, he seals up a company of a hundred and forty-four thousand Christians in the eastern part, as chap. vii. 2, to be preserved and continued in the true profession of his name, under these two, the sorest and longest, and there called the woe-woe-trumpets, which were to fall upon the eastern part of the empire, in which parts these servants of his there sealed were to lie, as appears, chap. ix. 4. And this their sealing is the sum of the 7th chapter.

Now then that old Roman empire being thus removed in both parts of it, yet still look, as that eastern part of it is left possessed by the Turks, in the 9th chapter; so the western part of it, in Europe, being broken into ten kingdoms by the Goths, they consent to give their power to the beast, the Pope, who so becomes a successor to the western emperor, and possesseth his seat and power, though under another title, and so heals that wound given. And this beast the 13th chapter describes, and gives the vision of his rise, power, time of his reign. And the 17th chapter doth expound and interpret under whose antichristian tyranny—as great as that of Rome heathenish, or of the Turks themselves to Christians—Christ yet preserves another like company of a hundred and forty-four thousand, chap. xiv., even

the like number of virgins who are sealed Christians in the west, as under the tyranny of the Turks and Saracens he had done the like in the east; so himself keeping possession still by his church, preserved under both, of both these parts of the empire, as his inheritance. And this opposite company of a hundred and forty-four thousand Christians, opposite to the whore, there called virgins, and their separation from her and opposition to her, are recorded chap. xiv.

But now these two, the Pope and Turk, both enemies to Christ, thus succeeding in the empire, and sharing the two parts of it between them, Jesus Christ, we see, is still as far off from his designed kingdom as he was before. For Mohammedanism tyranniseth in the one, idolatry overspreads the other, as heathenism had done the empire; and so he hath a new business of it to come unto his kingdom, as difficult as ever.

Chap. xv., xvi.—Therefore Christ hath seven vials, which contain the last plagues, for he means to make this the last act of this long tragi-comedy, to despatch the Pope and Turk, and root them out, even as the seals had done heathenism, and the trumpets had done the empire itself. And the plagues of these vials are the contents of the 15th and 16th chapters.

The first five vials do dissolve and ruin the Pope's power by degrees in the west; then the sixth vial breaks the power of the Turk in the east; so making way for the Jews, whom he means to bring into fellowship of his kingdom in their own land.

But by these six vials their power and kingdom not being wholly ruined and removed, both Turk and Popish party join, and putting to their utmost forces, and together with them, all opposite kings of the whole world, against the Christians, both east and west, who, whenas the Jews are come in and converted, make up a mighty party in the world; unto the help of whom, against these and all opposite power whatsoever, Christ himself comes, and makes but one work of it, and with his own hand from heaven destroys them. And so 'it is done,' as the voice of the last vial is in the 16th chapter.

Chap. xvii.—The 17th chapter is an interpretation who is the beast and whore.

Chap. xviii.—The 18th chapter sings a funeral-song of triumph for this whore's ruin; after which comes in Christ's kingdom, the New Jerusalem.

Chap. vii.–ix.—Which new kingdom of his shall be made up of, first, eastern Christians that endured the bondage of the two woe-trumpets, the Saracen and Turks, yet continuing to profess his name; and therefore unto those hundred and forty-four thousand in the 7th chapter, do succeed an innumerable company with palms in their hands, who have the same promises of the New Jerusalem made to them, (the very same that are found mentioned in the 21st chapter,) which shews their interest therein. And—

Secondly, This kingdom of Christ shall be made up of western Christians also, whose hundred and forty-four thousand in the 14th chapter do arise in like manner to an innumerable company: who, after the rejection of the whore, chap. xix. 1–9, are brought in singing in like triumph, decking themselves for the marriage in fine linen. But—

Thirdly, This kingdom of Christ shall be made up especially of Jews, dispersed both east and west, and over all the world; and therefore hath the name from them, the New Jerusalem. With whom—

Fourthly, Come in as attendants of their joy other Gentiles with them, that never had received Christ before: the 'glory of the Gentiles' is said to be brought into it.

Chap. xx.–xxii.—And so both east and west, Jew and Gentile, and the fulness of both, comes in, and becomes one fold for a thousand years, under one shepherd, one kingdom under this 'root of David,' their king, King Jesus the conqueror, even as it first was under one heathen idolatrous emperor, when first Christ set himself to conquer it. And so is fulfilled that prophecy of this his kingdom, Isa. lix. 19, where, after the final destruction of all Christ's enemies, foretold ver. 18, 'then,' he says, 'they shall fear his name, from the east unto the west, and the Redeemer shall come unto Sion.' Which words, Rom. xi. 26, Paul interprets of the Jews' final call, and this restauration of the world with them. 'Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'

Chap. v.—In the 5th chapter we have an account of a book with seven seals, which none could open. In this strait comes Christ, and takes upon him the opening and fulfilling of the book, and the decrees therein. At this the chorus fall down and worship.

Ver. 1.—First, What is this book? Many make it the Scriptures. But it is plain it is a book containing the affairs of the world and the church, and God's decrees about it. For upon the opening of every seal he sees a vision containing the matter of the ensuing chapters, the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th; and when the seals were all taken off, chap. x., John is bidden to eat the book, that he might prophesy again the other part of this prophecy. So as it is this book of the Revelation, and the government of the church and world set forth therein, which Christ takes, and, by taking the book, undertakes to manage and exercise that government, which agrees with what is said at the beginning of this book, Rev. i. 1.

Ver. 2.—A strong angel proclaimeth, 'Who is worthy to loose the seals thereof?' &c. The use of the seals is not simply to shew it cannot be known, as Daniel's sealed book is to shew it could not be known till the end, Dan. xii. 4, but for the further setting out the glory of Christ, who was only able to take the book and to lobse the seals. To take the book, first, God causeth a general proclamation to be made to all creatures, as some kings have done for a noble service, promising great reward, as Saul did, 1 Sam. xvii. 26, 27. Secondly, an angel makes it, to shew that none among angels could, and a strong angel, that his voice may reach all creatures. The end of this was, first, to stir up strong desires in John, and all else, to search into the meaning of this prophecy; what he did in the 1st chapter of Revelation, ver. 3, here he provokes unto the same by this proclamation. Secondly, another end of it was to set out the weakness of the creature, that the honour of Christ might appear that he only can do this. It is the manner of God thus to endear mercies to us, as he endeared a wife to Adam. He first brought all creatures to him, that he might first see that there was not a meet help for him among them. So in the work of salvation, he lets the soul try all means first, to run to duties, and to all helps, and then brings it to Christ. So, 1 Cor. i., that the power of God might appear, he first lets the world try their wisdom, and then sends the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, ver. 21, 25. It is a question among the school-men, whether any mere creature could satisfy for sin? Some say they could, and some say it is a needless question. But it is a necessary thing to know that a creature could not; for it glorifies Christ the more, as in the present case it doth that all creatures here were first challenged. And this here is an argument for that also; for if they could not open the book, they could much less have redeemed us, for that is made a greater thing, ver. 9, where they sing that 'Christ was therefore worthy to open the book, because he

had redeemed us.' Heb. x., God was not pleased with the blood of bulls and goats, ver. 5.

Use.—Hence learn we to renounce all kings, priests, and prophets, in comparison of Christ; he is a priest to redeem, and a prophet to teach and reveal the mysteries of God, and he is the king to execute all God's decrees. It is good to go over all the creatures, and to renounce them, and say, I will be saved by none of you. Suppose the work of redemption was yet to work, and God should make this proclamation as here, Find me out a party able to redeem, I 'll speak to him; call a council, seek one, (none would be found;) and how should we have howled and wept, as John did here, and say we were undone? And then suppose God should have set out Christ at last. But he would not put you to this plunge; it is the more love shewn by him to find out Christ, and to speak to him himself to die for us, and do it to our hands.

Observe from those words, *Who is worthy?*—It is not simply an act of power to break open the seals, but to have authority by worth; so that which puts the value on Christ's satisfaction was the worth of his person, and so in this act to open the book. A mere creature might have had as much habitual grace, and performed as much duty, but who is worthy? It is the personal worth which did it: 'Such a high priest became us, who is higher than the heavens,'—that is, than the angels,—Heb. x. Secondly, None was found worthy: the word is *none;* it is not restrained to man, no man, but never a reasonable creature, in the heavens angels, nor in earth men.

Neither to look thereon—that is, to look in it to understand it, for else John could and did look on it, ver. 1. Now, to loose the seals and open the book is not simply to know God's mind in his decrees, but to make the vision of them to John, and to execute and fulfil them in times; it is an allusion to those which take a commission, who take it not only to look on it, but to fulfil it. It is a commission sealed, so as this proclamation is in effect, Who shall be able to be God's commissioner to take this book, and make the visions to John, and execute and produce them in their time?

And this appears from chap. vi. 1. Still as the seals are opened by the Lamb, there is a vision made to John of what should be done; therefore the Lamb is presented not simply as one that should take the book, but that hath eyes and horns—eyes of providence, and horns of power to execute. And this agrees with the allusion unto Gen. xlix. 9, 10, where Judah is made a type of Christ, and called a lion's whelp, and the sceptre given him; and is called God's lawgiver, to take his laws from him and execute them, for in that respect it is that Judah is called God's lawgiver, Gen. xlix. 11: not in respect of the giving the laws of God, but in respect of the executive power to see them kept. So Christ here; and he so takes this book as to deliver it to us to execute the decrees of it.

Ver. 4. *And I wept much.*—John weeps. He was called up to heaven to see visions; and now there was a stop: it was to set off the mercy, and to try his heart, and make the joy greater.

Obs. 1.—Our infirmities shall not hinder God's revealing himself, though unbelief may say it will never be; yet Christ will go on to reveal himself, as here to John.

Obs. 2.—God in greatest mercies may make greatest stops, enough to bring to despair; you shall see no hope ere he grants them, so to John here. So in the first works of conversion many times; and so in great works he calls

men to, he may make a stop. John was called to see visions, yet a stop and pause was in his view made.

Obs. 3.—If by John's weeping were meant his praying to God in this stop put, then you see the way to obtain revelations of God is by tears and praying; so Daniel prayed and wept, Dan. x. 2, and then God revealed himself.

John is comforted by a stander-by, (1.) by something to uphold his heart; (2.) by the sight of the Lamb, ver 6.

Obs. 4.—The degrees God uses to comfort his people:—(1.) To let fall something that gives hopes of Christ, to draw the soul to wait; then, (2.) to shew them Christ himself. God might have shewed John the Lamb at first, but first he comforts him by a stander-by; so Job first 'heard by the hearing of the ear, and then his eye saw him.'

Ver. 6.—Christ, the only opener of this book and giver of this prophecy, is diversely expressed:—

1. He is called the 'root of David,' out of Isa. xi. 10. Christ put this riddle to the Pharisees, How David could call him Lord, if he were his son? So how could he be called the root, if he were David's son and a branch of him? The truth is, he is the root of David, and of all the saints; he was the root of his ancestors, the father of his mother. The root of any family in Scripture is put for the eldest son in it, who is as the root of the rest. So, Isa. xiv. 30, 'I will kill thy root with famine,'—that is, thy first-born, the root of thy house,—for in opposition he says, and 'the first-born of the poor shall be fed.' So, Mal. iv. 1, that therefore Christ is the root of David, the meaning is, that he is the 'first-born among all his brethren,' as, Rom. viii., he is called; and, Ps. lxxxix. 27, so God calls David in the type, but intends Christ thereby, when he says, 'I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth;' and, ver. 29, 'His seed shall endure for ever.' This is to be the root of David. 'He is the first-born of every creature, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,' Eph. iii. 15.

2. He is called the 'lion of the tribe of Judah;' but why a lion of the tribe of Judah? It is a manifest allusion to the prophecy, Gen. xlix. 9, wherein Judah, as this place shews, is made a type of Christ; and it warrants the application of all there unto Christ.

Judah is called a lion—

(1.) Because out of Judah came all the worthies and lion-like men, Joshua, Othniel, David, all the shadows of Christ; therefore, Gen. xlix. 11, he is called 'an old lion,' as the word is, a courageous, hearty lion: so, 2 Sam. xvii. 10, valiant men are called lions; such was Christ, who 'durst engage his heart to draw near to God,' Jer. xxx. 21.

(2.) Judah had that kingdom whereof a lion is the emblem; therefore sceptre and lawgiver, ver. 10, are attributed to him, so that it is as much as to say, Christ the king by inheritance, as Judah was, hath overcome.

(3.) Judah did take the prey, the land; it was done by the worthies of Judah—Joshua, David; and when, as a lion, they had taken that prey, they couched and had rest, as in Solomon's days, 1 Kings iv. 21, which was also prophesied of, Num. xxiii. 24, 'Behold, they rose up as a great lion, and shall not lie down till he eat the prey;' and Gen. xlix. 9, 'He couched as an old lion; who shall raise him up?' So Christ, when he had led captivity captive, sits down quietly in heaven, couching, as lying in wait till the day of judgment, when he will appear like an old lion that coucheth as if asleep, and then suddenly leaps on the prey. Especially in the latter days, when the gatherings shall be to him, his kingdom shall be as of a lion among beasts; so, Micah v. 8, he prophesies there of Christ's kingdom in the

calling the Jews, and of his birth, ver. 2. Now that kingdom is the scope of this book.

Ver. 6, *And in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain.*—John had heard of Christ as a lion, but he sees him as a lamb. So many a poor soul are afraid of him, but when you see him, and come to be acquainted with him, you will find him to be a lamb, and a lamb that hath eyes to run to and fro through the earth for you, and seven horns, not to hurt you but to butt his and your enemies. We have not all lion-like thoughts of Christ; as he hath the heart of a lion, so he hath the meekness of a lamb. You may wonder at this mixture; he is a lamb to you.

1. Why is he called a lamb? It is in allusion to the sacrifices of the old law, which were most of lambs; the ordinary sacrifices were two lambs a day, Num. xxviii. 3. Here he was to represent Christ as a priest; as before, in being called a lion, he was represented as a king; and therefore it follows, 'as it had been slain.'

2. *In the midst of the throne, &c., stood a lamb.*—The Lamb stood nearer than the four beasts, between the throne and the elders, for he is a mediator betwixt his church and God.

3. *As it had been slain.*—That is, *first*, as if he were newly slain, for his blood is fresh continually, as if he were slain to-day; thou seest thy sins, as if they were committed yesterday, and God views Christ's blood as if he were slain yesterday, Heb. ix. 12. *Secondly*, but 'as slain,' to shew he doth not remain slain, but is alive: Chap. i. 18, 'I was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.'

4. *Stood a lamb.*—Standing, to shew he is ready to help. When Stephen died, he saw Christ standing at God's right hand as ready to receive him. It is also to shew his readiness to intercede.

5. *Having seven horns.*—Horns are put for power to push with; so, Rev. xvii. 12, 'The ten horns are the ten kings.' The seven horns here, all kingly power; seven is a number of perfection, to shew Christ hath power to open the seven seals; and there are seven trumpets and seven vials, and Christ hath seven horns,—that is, power to fulfil all these. Antichrist rises like Christ, and comes with power, Rev. xiii. 11; but what discovers him? He hath but two horns; the church needs not fear him. The Lamb hath horns to vindicate himself of his enemies; fear not kings, though ten kings, he is King of kings; and fear not the devil, who is a roaring lion, for Christ the lion of the tribe of Judah is stronger than he, and will bind him.

6. *And seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*—The Spirit, not in his personal subsistence, is here meant, but in his instrumental working in gifts and providence, and so is called seven spirits. Before, in chap. iv. 5, the 'seven spirits before the throne' are gifts in the church which are from Christ, for he is the fountain of spiritual gifts, and hath the Spirit without measure; but here, by the seven spirits in Christ is not meant gifts poured out, but eyes of providence sent into the earth, by which he knows and sees all things, in allusion to that, Zech. iv. 10; and it implies the perfect knowledge and providence of Christ to order all affairs on earth for his church; so, 2 Chron. xvi. 9, as before in Zechariah, he did the affairs of the Persian monarch for the building of his church.

Obs.—Christ as man hath both horns and eyes to guide and discern all things here below; his human nature is the instrument of all God's power, all goes through his hands, and all the works of God's providence go all through his sight; he knows all is done in the world.

The next thing is, why Christ should be presented here under these

notions of a lion of the tribe of Judah, and a lamb, and the root of David, rather than any other. He speaks, (1.) In the language of the Old Testament, and of John Baptist, who was under the Old Testament, (who all spake of Christ.) So Luke xxiv. 27, 'Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them the things concerning himself.' Now Moses called him a lion, Gen. xlix. 9; Isaiah calls him a lamb, chap. liii. 7, and the root of David, chap. xi. 10; and John Baptist calls him the 'Lamb of God which bears the sins of the world.' Now as all other things in this book are set forth in allusion to the Old Testament, so these descriptions of Christ also. (2.) He gives him these titles in relation to the work of redemption, of which mention is made ver. 9. Now to that two things are required:—*First*, A price to God; and so as a lamb 'thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,' ver. 9. *Secondly*, Power to deliver us out of the hands of our enemies; so he is 'a lion that overcomes.' (3.) It hath relation especially to the opening this book, and executing the affairs in it; and so these titles are most proper: for—

First, He needed to die for it, and so is presented as a lamb slain; for that price that salvation did cost, each revelation to us must cost as much also. Not simply his being the Son of God, and so knowing the counsels of God written in his decrees, was enough for him to make them known to us; but to reveal this counsel to us, as in a book to be opened to us, he must die; for our sins hindered, and therefore he must die. Hence it is said, 'Thou art worthy to open the book, for thou wast slain,' ver. 9. And so, as a lamb, he is said to take sin away that hindered the revelation to us.

Secondly, As a lion he needed courage to approach God's wrath, break through a consuming fire to his throne to take the book; 'Who hath engaged his heart to draw near to me?' No angel durst have presumed to come so near.

Thirdly, As a lion he needed to overcome death, and rise to execute the contents of this book. A lion, they say, sleeps at first three days when brought forth, and then with the roaring of the old lion is roused, and sleeps the least of any creatures; so Christ rose by the power of his Father to sleep no more.

Fourthly, Being risen, he is set forth, (1.) As a lion of Judah, for in that prophecy, Gen. xlix. 11, as also Psalm lx. 7, Judah, in respect of his kingly office, is called God's lawgiver, not simply in respect of giving the laws,—that Moses, of the tribe of Levi, did,—but because Judah executed them; now because Christ did here take the book of God's decrees, and undertake to execute and fulfil them as God's commissioner, therefore he is in this place most properly in that respect the lion of the tribe of Judah. (2.) He is here set forth as a lamb with seven horns and eyes, in as fit and proper respect to this as might be, as one not fit only to give this prophecy, but to effect the things contained in it by his horns and eyes; and seven horns and seven eyes, to shew his full power to open the seven seals and the seven trumpets, and to pour out the seven vials. Such a prophet never was, who is not barely to reveal things, but to bring them to pass, and make them good. God gave Christ the platform of the occurrences to come, and power and wisdom to order the accomplishment of them.

He is set also forth under both, as a lamb and a lion, to shew his kingly and priestly office: to shew how, by virtue of both, he makes 'us kings and priests,' as they sing, ver. 10, and so they, having his kingdom in their eye, are confirmed in the promise of it by a remembrance of him. As a lamb and a lion thus strong and powerful; as a lamb he purchaseth the revelation of

what concerns the church; as a lamb with horns and eyes, he effects the accomplishment of it. And the sum of this book being to shew how Christ rules the world and his church, till he hath put down all rule, and how he takes the kingdom himself, therefore he is described as a lamb in respect of his quiet governing the affairs of the world and the church until that his kingdom come; and then as a lion, by open force, takes the kingdom and his church as a prey, out of the enemies' jaws, and that by the right of a promised succession from Judah and David; for which cases, those titles of the root of David and lion of Judah do here come in. In a word—

First, This title of his being the root of David, is to shew his right and title to that kingdom he is to receive, of which David and his kingdom was but a type.

Secondly, His being a lamb slain, is to shew both the right and title to that kingdom, and the price by which he purchased this his kingdom, even his blood.

Thirdly, His being a lion, is to shew the power by which he conquers and obtains, and then possesses it. Therefore this heavenly chorus or company here, when they do but see Christ, by taking this book to undertake the accomplishment of this prophecy,—the conclusion of which is his instalment into his kingdom,—they, in the joy and faith of it, cry out beforehand, 'We shall reign on earth,' as looking on all was to go before it as good as already done, and overlooking it all, having this kingdom chiefly in their eye.

Now, from the 8th verse to the end is a doxology, or a giving praise for the Lamb's taking the book, which consists of four parties or companies:—

First, Of twenty-four elders and the beasts; the church of men on earth. They begin and raise the song, ver. 8.

Secondly, Angels; they join and sing after, ver. 11.

Thirdly, Then all creatures come in also, ver. 13.

Fourthly, The beasts, as the leaders, say in the end, *Amen*, and close it, ver. 14.

Obs. 1.—Observe, in the general, that the sons of men are the eminentest praisers of God; they are the precentors in this heavenly choir, and they conclude the song. The reason is, because the highest work God did is the work of redemption, which concerns us, not the angels. For which, yet, the angels praise him in the 2d of Luke, as also here; yea, all the creatures rejoice in our redemption, ver. 13: but still we are the first-fruits, the top leaders. The angels follow; it is not said by them, 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood:' that concerns us; yet they sing praise.

Obs. 2.—Learn to bless God for his mercy and goodness to others; so, you see, the angels do for us. They cannot sing, as we, with an interest, yet they praise God for it; and this is their highest grace. Canst thou do so? Then comfort thyself, thou hast as good grace as any in the angels.

Obs. 3.—Yet learn to bless God with a sense of thy interest; that will raise thy heart a degree higher, as the church of men are here raised, ver. 9, 10, in their song by their interest. The praisers of the sons of men are described, (1.) having harps; (2.) golden vials. It is an allusion to the Levitical service in the temple, where they had musical instruments, and incense in bowls or vials, which, Zech. xiv. 20, are called 'the bowls of the altar:' not that musical instruments are to be in the worship of God now, no more than incense; but as incense was the type of prayer and praise, Ps. cxli. 2, 'Let my prayer come up before thee as incense,' so these harps are of that spiritual melody, as the apostle calls it, which we make to God in our hearts, even of spiritual songs in Christ, Eph. v. 19. Therefore John

himself interprets the odours or incense here to be the prayers of the saints: their hearts are the golden vials, having faith purer than gold, as Peter speaks, it being the spring of all their prayers; and their harps also are their hearts: *corda et chordæ* are near akin.

And every one is said to have harps; for in public worship all should join: the little strings go to make up a concert as well as the great. Though thou hast but little grace, yet God's worship would not be complete without thee.

And whereas John calls these odours the prayers of the saints, it makes nothing for what the Papists would collect hence, that the saints in heaven offer up the prayers of the saints on earth. For, *first*, this company are, as we said before, the church of men on earth. *Secondly*, these here offer not the prayers of others, but their own; for both themselves make the song, and it is a new one of their own making, and also the benefit they praise God for in it is their own: 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.' Those words therefore, 'the prayers of the saints,' are but the interpretation which John adds, and imply but this, that these were saints, and their odours were their prayers.

Ver. 9, *And they sung a new song.*—(1.) You shall find in the Psalms that when David had a new occasion in a further degree to praise God, he says, 'I will sing a new song;' and here was a new occasion given. (2.) *New*, in opposition to the *old* song under the Old Testament, as John xiii. 14, 'I give you a new commandment;' that is, of the gospel, called new in opposition to the commands of the old law. In the 4th chapter of this book, these elders had sung a song for the work of creation, ver. 11; but here they sing for the work of redemption, as ver. 9, which is the eminent work of the New Testament, as creation was of the Old, and therefore it is called a new song. (3.) Here there is a more special reason why they should sing a new song, for the New Jerusalem was in their eye, Christ's kingdom and their kingdom; 'we shall reign on earth,' there all things shall be made new, and therefore their song is new: a new song for the instalment of their new king; thus Ps. xcvi. 1, which is a psalm of this kingdom of Christ, as appears ver. 10, 13; that psalm therefore begins, 'O sing to the Lord a new song.'

Obs. 1.—Learn to frame new matter of praise and affections upon every new occasion.

Obs. 2.—We are to bless God for creation and redemption both; to take in the mention of old blessings when we give thanks for new, as a good scribe is said to bring forth of his treasure things new and old: so in thanksgiving we are to sing the old song and the new.

The matter of the song is praise to the Lamb.

First, The person praised is the Lamb; 'Thou art worthy.' In answer to the proclamation, 'Who is worthy?' Thou, and thou alone; for to him, and by him, and for him are all things, Col. i. 16.

Secondly, The things for which they praise him are, (1.) for his death, that he died to redeem; (2.) for his resurrection, intimated in this, 'Thou wast slain:' the one making us priests, the other kings; as follows, ver. 10. And 'to this end Christ died and rose, that he might be lord and king,' Rom. xiv. 9. The word which is translated here *redeemed*, is in the original *bought*.

Ver. 9, *For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and people, and tongue, and nation.*

Obs. 1.—That the blood of Christ was paid as a price to God to purchase

our redemption, 1 Cor. vi. 20, 'bought with a price;' and in 1 Tim. ii. he calls it a ransom.

Obs. 2.—That Christ hath not redeemed all men; for it is not every nation and tribe, but out of every nation, the elect only.

Obs. 3.—In that they say Christ is worthy to receive the book because he was slain, it argues this Book of the Revelation is a special fruit of his death, and so should be the more prized by us; before Christ's death, we hear Christ himself say he knew not when the day of judgment should be, but now he is slain, and hath taken this book, he doth, ver. 10.

Ver. 10, *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.*—Christ was before set forth as a lion for a king, so as a lamb for a priest; and both were mentioned to shew the grounds of our being both kings and priests, who shall reign on earth.

Obs. 1.—That this comforted the saints of old, even the consideration of Christ's kingdom on earth; and how peremptory are they, 'We *shall* reign!' They mention that, because that is the end and scope of the Revelation, the conclusion of this book, when the seals are off and the book finished, and so they have it in their eye; and they seeing Christ undertaking the accomplishment of all in this book, whereof this is the issue, are confirmed in the faith of it.

Obs. 2.—That this kingdom of Christ on earth to come is a far more glorious condition for the saints than what their souls have now in heaven; for these here overlook that condition which yet they were to run through, and their thoughts fly to comfort themselves with this, 'We shall reign on earth.'

Ver. 11.—In this verse come in the other company of the angels singing; who, first, for their *number*, are ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. In the 7th of Daniel, where the same throne and kingdom of Christ is prophesied of, there is the same number of his guard of angels mentioned.

Obs. 1.—God hath another world of rational creatures, which we see not; and what a story then will the latter day produce!

Obs. 2.—What need we fear when there are so many for us? as 2 Kings vi. 17.

For their *station;* they are behind the elders, &c., yet round about the throne; not so near as the elders, they are the guard of the queen of heaven, the Lamb's wife, the church. Ps. xxxiv. 7, 'Angels encompass round about them that fear him;' and are sent out for their good, Heb. i. 14.

Ver. 12.—The song follows, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive,' &c.

Obs. 1.—Christ, though he were worthy by inheritance, yet he was also worthy by purchase, to receive all these; so the words imply, 'that was slain.'

Obs. 2.—As he hath seven horns and seven eyes, so he hath a sevenfold praise.

Obs. 3.—And because they cannot praise him enough, they heap up words to praise him with.

Obs. 4.—None is worthy to be the king of all the world but only Jesus Christ; and indeed it were too much for any creature. The angels themselves were top-heavy of their glory, which made them reel out of heaven; but Christ hath the Godhead to poise him. No beast is naturally a king of beasts but the lion, says the philosopher; nor none worthy to be king of all creatures but this lion of the tribe of Judah.

The things which they attribute to him are—

First, Power; that is, authority over all: so Christ says, John xvii 'To me all power is given.'

Secondly, Riches; that is, possession of all creatures: 'all things are and so ours. 2 Cor. viii. 9, 'Christ, who was rich, was made poor;' riche glory, knowledge, all are his.

Thirdly, Strength, joined with power and authority. Able he i work anything; not as other kings that have great power and authority, no more personal strength than other men: he hath therefore seven hor

Fourthly, Wisdom; and this as large as his power and dominions knows all God means to do, and sees all with his own seven eyes; not o men's, as other kings do.

Fifthly, Honour; that respects what all creatures bring in to him: all adore and bow the knee to him, Phil. ii.

Sixthly, Glory, both in his personal excellencies, and also what Father gives him; he sits at God's right hand, and with his Father gov and shall come in his Father's glory, and in his person is the brightne his glory.

Seventhly, Blessing; which respects that glory which, for his special g ness to them, his saints do give him. Others give honour to Christ,— devils do,—but not blessing; that the saints only do, for that respects munication of goodness: they only bless him whom he blesseth first.

Obs.—Christ hath all desirable excellencies in him: beauty, glory, hor esteem, riches, strength, wisdom.

Ver. 13, *And every creature.*—Every creature in its kind shall wor Christ, Phil. ii. Every creature comes in here, because when Christ's k dom is set up, they shall be renewed, Rom. viii. 19, Ps. xcvi. 10, 11; creatures under the earth, bodies of saints departed, and precious stones, for all creatures shall be used in a glorious liberty.

The church of men began the song, and these continue it; for it is mercy to them that is matter of the song, and the instauration of their k and therefore we are to be stirred up the more to do it in that we see all the creatures do it, whom it doth not so much concern.

Ver. 14, *And the four beasts said, Amen;* and the elders follow: the cers begin and end.

Amen seems to be an ordinance, a word to be used by officers first, then by the people; as 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

A DISCOURSE OF CHRIST'S REWARD;

OR,

OF THE GLORY WHICH HE RECEIVES IN HEAVEN,

AS DUE TO THE EXCELLENCY OF HIS PERSON, AND AS THE RECOMPENSE OF HIS WORK OF REDEMPTION PERFORMED.*

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.—REV. V. 12.

I DESIGN to give you a particular, as we use to call it, of that estate of glory which was Christ's due, and which our Lord of glory parted with and was emptied of, and compare with each the particulars of his emptied, humbled estate, contrary thereunto.

And for this I might refer unto those inherent glories that were his due, to have broke forth from the first in him, as also those privileges and royalties of his; and so here, upon that argument, set by them his standing out of all these, and emptying himself of them during his humbled estate.

I shall take that royal proclamation of his glories which the holy and blessed angels, his heralds, have made, and take what I find summed up in one cluster, growing on one stalk, or in one verse, Rev. v. 12, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' That they speak it of him as God-man is clear, in that he is called the Lamb.

But before I enter upon the merits of my design specified, I must remove an objection, that my running over those particulars mentioned will not be pertinent unto the ends and purpose which I even now proposed: for the main argument is, the glories which were his due as God-man before his redemption of us; and the laying down of that glory was the main ingredient of that sacrifice he offered up for his redeeming of us. But the royalties there ascribed as worthy to be given him are what, the angels say, he was worthy of for having redeemed us; for the account they give them

* This fragment—which appears to have been notes for what, in Presbyterian churches, is called a 'table-service,' that is, an address to communicants before partaking of the Lord's Supper—is given in this place, because it is an exposition of a passage in the Book of Revelation; although, so far as the matter of it is concerned, it would more properly fall under another division of the Author's Works. This Discourse closes the Expository portion of Goodwin's Works.—ED.

hereupon is, as he is the Lamb slain, and not at all as God-man. For the removal of which, and clearing the aptness and meetness of the allegation of these, as suitable in the scope and matter of them unto my forementioned purpose, I premise these answers:—

First, As to that, that the angels should proclaim him worthy of all these *because slain*, and as the Lamb that was slain, as ver. 9 seems to carry it: suppose that were the scope, yet it is but to declare a superadditional glory of Christ's, consisting in this, that he should merit by his death what was otherwise naturally due to him in his person, who was slain; and so a redoubled honour accrue to him upon several titles, that he who in himself, and the dignity of his person, was worthy of all these, should moreover by the merits of his death purchase thereby to be worthy of them also; and so that although he merited them by his being slain, yet it was but what was his own by another right before due to his person, but now moreover to his actions and sufferings, and how that by them he deserved them also. And so in that one description or character of him both dues are here both involved at once. First, The *Lamb*, noting his person God-man; and it is his title given his person, now he is in glory, throughout this book. Secondly, The Lamb *that was slain*. Both which, under the same terms in effect, Peter indigitates, 1 Pet. i. 19, 'Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;' where the preciousness of his blood is inferred from the preciousness of his person. (1.) He mentions Christ, whom, in his person, he expressly calls elect and precious in the following chapter, (ii. 6,) and whom he sets forth in his person as a foundation to our faith, and also unto his merit for us, which is the approximate ground of our faith. Then, (2.) he speaks of this glorious person's being sacrificed to death, for his blood there is said to be the price, 'as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,' alluding to the paschal lamb, his type: for, indeed, even the value of that price by his death was founded on the innate worthiness of his person, as to whom all these were due on the pure account thereof; for his having been slain would not have made him worthy of all these, if his person that was slain had not been worthy of all these before he was slain. Yea, and the angels do mention his death, in this their doxology of praise, chiefly as a description of his person in this sense: that he whose person was the Lamb of God, (God-man,) and further, had been he that was slain, was worthy, &c.; and of the two it is certain the worthiness of his person far exceeds the merits of his sufferings and actions.

Secondly, The like allegation may be made concerning the manifestative glory of the other two Persons; for that very glory which is personally due to each Person as God, they are yet proclaimed worthy to receive upon occasion of some special work done by them: and thus it is with Christ here. Thus God the Father, of whom the angels say, chap. vii. 12, 'Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen:' all these are his due as he is God; and yet, chap. iv. 11, he—for of him it is spoken—is proclaimed 'worthy' to receive glory, and honour, &c., 'for thou hast created all things.' Thus it is with Christ for having performed the work of redemption here.

Thirdly, It is true there is a glory given to Christ which wholly relates to the work of redemption alone; even as to God the Father also, for and upon his work of creation; who, although he was God, and so almighty, able to create, yet he could not have had the glory of creating or being a creator, unless he had actually created, though in that he is able to create, he might have been entitled to such a power. And so Christ hath this glory given

upon occasion of his being a Redeemer, and that he is a Redeemer; for he was slain, and without it he had not been a Redeemer; yet still look, as God receives in and upon the work of creation but the glory of his being God,—the invisible things of God being manifested therein, 'even his eternal power and Godhead,'—so Christ, in receiving the glory of redemption, receives but the acknowledgments of those portions due to him as God-man, now further manifested in that work.

Fourthly, In that he is said 'to receive them' after his being slain, this prejudiceth it not but that they were due to his person before. For not only of God himself the same phrase is used, 'Worthy art thou to receive glory,'—that is, as given from all thy creatures, Rev. iv. 11; it is spoken of him that sits on the throne, ver. 10,—but also here, as it is used of Christ, it refers to that actual possession he had taken of glory upon his ascension, which is called his entering into glory after his sufferings: Luke xxiv. 26, 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?' All which the angels after his ascension thus applaud, and cry *Euge* to. And in respect to this possession then given, and received by him, it is said he was made both Lord and Christ: Acts ii. 34–36, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ;' which is clearly spoken of his ascension, and yet he was Lord and Christ before. And in the like manner doth the Revelation speak of his entering into possession of the kingdoms of the world: Rev. xi. 17, 'Thou hast taken to thee thy great power.' It was his before; *his* power as his due, and yet as now but the taker of it; and therein takes but what is his right into his own hands. And the phrase, *takes to him*, is usually spoken of one that hath newly taken to him a right or due that was detained from him, or out of his own hands, and exercised by others that kept it from him, yet belonging to him; and so here, when he is declared worthy to have received, &c., and to receive after his suffering, it is to be judged that he doth but take to him what was his. And—

Lastly, That all these were his by inheritance, as being God's natural eldest son, you have expressly, Heb. i. 4, 5, 'Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son,' by inheritance, as being eldest son, and the only-begotten of God. Yea, in his very conception, and the union of God-man, he was the Son of God; and therefore all this royalty or glory was then his due by inheritance: Luke i. 35, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God;' *called*, that is, shall have the name of being God's Son, and therewith all that dignity, power, glory whatsoever, that were due to him that was the only-begotten Son of God, John i. And the angel shews that he should have all these in title as his right and due the first instant of his conception; all which he yet had not in full and actual possession until he, as now here, was come to heaven.

And therefore that it is here said, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive,' &c., imports not as if he received it only because he was slain; nor is it any way implied thereby, that it was not his right by personal inheritance, no more than that a king that is a while kept from his right, and

obtains the possession of it by conquest, may not yet be said to have it by inheritance also, yea, and so as he holds that to be the surer and better title also. In that very chapter, where his kingly dignity is solemnised, there are these three distinct titles proclaimed of him :—*First*, By inheritance, in that he is called the 'Root of Jesse.' The eminentest and eldest in a family are called the root, or the father of that family: so Isa. xiv. 30. Now, though David was the youngest son, yet, Ps. lxxxix. 27, God said of him, 'I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth;' who as in that right received the kingdom, to shew that Christ, as God's first-born, should by inheritance receive it also; which is the title I am now a-pleading. *Secondly*, He is called the 'Lion of Judah,' who got the land by conquest; so Joshua, of that tribe, Christ's type. *Thirdly*, 'A Lamb slain,' that bought it with his blood.

This objection being thus removed, and the text thus adapted to my intended purpose, I approach now unto my intended design, which is to set in one view, in two opposite schemes or draughts, these personal excellencies of Christ God-man as it were in one side or page, as in such cases we use to place things opposite or parallel; and the contrary humbled estate in the form of a servant on the opposite page, as being ἀντιστοιχεία, contrary one to the other.

Concerning these his excellencies and royalties due to his person, I premise but two things in general ere I enter upon the aforesaid particular comparison :—

First, That these perfections he is celebrated for, are in number seven, which is the number of perfection; for they contain a fulness and completeness of perfections, and those personally due to him.

The *second* is, that they are the good and holy angels, who behold his face and the Father's, who do give him the eulogy and praise of them. And the testimony of angels ought to have a mighty impression upon us. You see what a weight is put upon but one angel's testimony that gave Revelation to John, and it is as the seal set to the whole book, Rev. xxii. 16, 'I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify these things.' What then is the testimony of all the holy angels, the whole choir of them? And so it is prefaced to these words in the foregoing 11th verse, 'And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy,' &c. This witness of theirs must therefore have an answerable reverential repute with us, for they must needs be held the most faithful and able witness in this matter. Indeed, above all other creatures, we men redeemed do experimentally feel what he is as he is a Redeemer, and know that, in that respect, better than they. And therefore there is that emphatical difference to be observed in the song of the chorus of men, giving glory to him, Rev. v. 9, 10, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.' Oh, how feelingly do they enlarge upon it! But yet the angels, when they say, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,' though they go no further in their mention of it, yet they speak all this upon their own knowledge, and that a knowledge of sight, and not of obscure faith, as in a glass darkly; for they see his person every day,—1 Tim. iii. 16, 'taken up into glory, seen of angels,'—and seen as now he is in glory, since his taking up; and so are to be valued for the most competent witnesses to this matter of his personal glory, as also for the most faithful and impartial, in that he

is of another nature from theirs: 'He took not the nature of angels.' But yet they are so taken with, and overcome with this glory of his person now it is in their eye, that not only they envy not at this his exaltation as man so far above them, as the evil angels of their own nature do, and for that cause did, that you see on the contrary how they magnify and extol it. You may well and worthily then receive their testimony, as next to that of God himself, and say, in allusion to what John says of God's witness of Christ, 1 John v. 9, 'If ye receive the witness of men, the witness of' angels 'is greater.'

And so I am more immediately arrived at that comparison I promised in each particular of these glories set in opposition against every answerable humiliation, not only emptying of them in Christ's humbled condition, but the perfect contrary brought upon him; and this the holy angels themselves give us occasion, and invite us to do, by saying, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;' they considered, and took in both into the burden of their song.

Let us therefore, as I said before, turn that part of the optic glass that renders the sun in its brightest strength and glory, and then turn the other end that renders it as a small snuff, discoloured, and riding in darkness and blackness; and we may, among other, make this use of it, when you come to the sacrament to celebrate the memory of Christ crucified, take a view of Christ in both. *First*, see him as crowned with glory and honour, as the Apostle speaks they saw him, Heb. ii., sitting on the throne of Majesty on high; and *then* as crowned with thorns, naked, despised, hanging on a tree. You have them both in sight in that one ver. 9: 'We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, by the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.' And that βραχύ τι, *a little* lower, understand not of his being, in that he was a man, therefore *a little degree* lower; but it is spoken of the shortness of the *time* in which he was made lower; for otherwise, as for the lowness itself of condition which he was brought unto, the comparison unto the angels was not sufficiently expressive, it is too high to set it forth; for he was in that respect made lower than any man. 'I am a worm, and no man,' said he, Ps. xxii., that before had said, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' And as you consider any part of his debasement, mingle this thought with it, Thus glorious should my Jesus have been at that time, but he gave himself, and all, away for me.

The first attribute is power; that is, *authority*, δύναμις, which is here put for ἐξουσία, as sometimes elsewhere; for here it is distinguished from ἰσχύς, *strength*, which is another of the particulars that follows. And it is a sure rule in interpreting this place, that each of these seven are distinct from the other, else they observed not the number seven, the number of perfection. And to set out Christ's completeness thereby is his scope, John xvii. 2, 'Thou hast given him power over all flesh;' and, Matt. xxviii., 'All power is given me both in heaven and earth,' even all that power executive, not essential, which God himself means actually to exercise or put forth; all this power is committed to him; as himself at another time saith, John v. 22, 'All judgment is committed to the Son.' And thus as in respect of actual exercise of authority, God's and Christ's power as God-man may be said to be of equal extent,—one God, one Lord, of both whom are all things that are,—so by virtue of this he hath all subject to him, 2 Pet. iii. 22, 'Angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to him;' so as Christ, by virtue of it, commands whatever is done in this and that other world. You have seen him in his greatness in this respect.

See him now stript of all this: Matt. xx. 25, 'Ye know that the princes

of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.' Then, ver. 28, he propounds his example, 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.' It is as if he had said, The Son of man foretold by Daniel, (as in chap. vii. we find it,) to whom was 'given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed,' ver. 14. Though it was his right to exercise dominion on these petty constables, who, for such are kings over the nations, yet under him; instead of being over, says he, all these sorts of attendants, I minister to all, and my whole life is a service devoided of all authority but over devils and diseases; but otherwise it is a subjection to all other; and I am not only a servant unto God herein, but am subjected to men. And what was his end in this but to make a price of redemption for us thereof, together with his whole life, and 'to give his life a ransom for many?' He is subject not only to the lawful authority of the Roman empire as then extant, but so he would have been of any state he might have been supposed to live in, which he considered enough then; the exactors of tribute required it of him by Peter, to put him in mind of it, Matt. xvii.* But he declared, in his answer to their demand, himself a king's son; and therefore he says, ver. 26, 'The children of kings are free.' And in those words he speaks to this effect: To give thee, Peter, a demonstration of what authority and dominion I have in this world, I will not pay it out of that ready-money I have, or thou hast by thee, nor will I borrow it of any man, but I will command a fish to pay me tribute, and with that do thou pay Cæsar. So as whilst he subjects himself to this authority, he shews a greater authority himself had, which Cæsar had not. This authority, power, and dominion he gave away, and receded from it; yea, further, he that had authority to command all in heaven and earth, a far larger and superior dominion than Cæsar's reached to, was often put to hide himself, and fly from that authority that sought his life, as if he had not been able to have commanded the preservation of it. Thus when a babe he was forced to go into Egypt for fear of Herod; when come back again, to go into Nazareth for fear of Archelaus; and when come to age, he was so divested and emptied of all power as he was forced to retire into the borders of Canaan, at one time, to hide and skulk, as we say. And again, John iv. 1, 3, 'When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.' And another time, John xi. 53, 54, 'Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.' Yea, then when he was to be apprehended by a band of men, he yet considers enough what power and authority he had in heaven for his rescue: Matt. xxvi. 53, 54, 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?' Even then he subjects and empties himself: If I should take this on me, how should the Scriptures be fulfilled? which have said, I must die, and suffer, and thus it must be. So at the bar he suffers himself to be arraigned by authority, and to be smitten by an under-officer, as one that reviled the autho-

* It appears, however, to have been a tax imposed on the Jews by themselves, for the maintenance of the temple-service, that Jesus paid on this occasion.—ED.

rity which the smiter of him judged he ought to have been subject to, yea, thought much at it that so poor a wretch as he should presume not to do it: John xviii. 22, 'And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?' As if he should say, Answerest *thou*, so vile, so mean a wretch as thou art, the high priest so? And he then also considers what was his due, and declares it before them openly at the bar, when they contemned him, as being then, through his own willing emptying himself, in their power. Thus, Matt. xxvi. 64, 'Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven;' that is, You have me now under, and this is your hour, and you think of me but as of another man subject to you: neverthless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. What need I say more as to this argument but this, that he to whom all authority in heaven and earth is committed, was accused and condemned, and the cause for which he was condemned was, that he was a rebel and a traitor unto authority?

The second particular glory of which Christ divested himself for us is *riches*, which some refer to those riches of wisdom spoken of, Col. ii.; but wisdom we find comes in after; nor are they riches of glory, for they are in like manner summed up in glory, which also follows. But these riches here are attributed to Christ as a king, which is the subject of this chapter; and a kingdom consists, as in authority, so in riches, &c.; and so these riches do import the right of possession unto all things whatsoever—the *jus* or dominion over all creatures, as being his proper goods and chattels. And to this purpose it is said, 'All is yours, for you are Christ's;' so that all are his first and originally, and our right is but a derivation from him. We read that *Wisdom* (that is, Christ) says, Prov. viii. 18, 'Riches and honour are with me.' The earth is full, as of his glory, Isa. vi., for that is spoken of Christ; so of his riches, as Ps. civ. 24. And of Christ it is that it is said, Ps. xxiv. 1, 'The earth is his, and the fulness of it; the world, and they that dwell therein;' it is spoken of Christ, 'that king of glory,' as ver. 8, 10, of whom that psalm is made: for it is he to whom those everlasting doors did open when he ascended, as in the close of that psalm. His riches lie not in chattels only, but in persons also: 'the fulness of the earth, and the inhabitants also,' as in that psalm. The angels here, you see, acknowledge that all riches are his, and therewithal that themselves possess not a foot of ground in heaven but what is Christ's. And if they, the supremest rank of God's creation, are his servants, as that angel acknowledgeth himself to be, Rev. xix., and ministering spirits, Heb. i.,—and servants and ministers about a great king or great person are part of their riches,—then surely all things else must be put into this inventory. Now see the grace, the love of Christ, as the apostle speaks, 2 Cor. viii. 9, 'That though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor.' He emptied himself of the possession of all, and left not himself so much as a hole to hide his head in. He speaks in relation to his outward possession of anything; for his scope in that place was to exhort to giving to others. And this poverty was from his very birth. Consider but how his mother did lie in,—you that are rich, fine dames, you will soon be sensible of this more than others: she lies in in straw, as beasts at best, not in a bed, no, not in a house, but a stable; and the babe himself was laid in a manger. His parents that brought him up from an infant were poor, and such must his accommodations and breeding be. Witness

the offering they made at his bringing to the temple, Luke ii. 24. And after in his life, the world was not amended with him. He lives upon the charity of others, and had but merely wherewith to live. He is made dependent upon women, who themselves have not to give, but out of that their husbands allow them; thus Luke viii. 3; and therein was made a servant; for so is the borrower to the lender, as Solomon speaks. And at his death it continued still to be thus with him. He is fain to commend his mother to another, to John, to keep her when he is gone, having nothing himself to leave her. His clothes, though mean, were not his own to dispose of at that time; but the guards and watchmen that waited him till death cast lots for them before his face; and himself considered it, and laid it to heart, as in Ps. xli., (made of him, and expressing his heart, ver. 9.) It is strange that in the midst of such tortures he then hung in, he should mind this circumstance, so small a one: but we are thereby taught that he considered everything he suffered, as well as every sin of ours he suffered for; and was accordingly afflicted that he that was so great, so rich a person, if he had had his own in his right and due, should be brought to this, and stripped of all, and should have those his mean and worthless clothes to be disposed of before his eyes, in a way of sport, as well as otherwise. This wounded and pierced his heart, as well as that they pierced his hands and his feet, and gave him vinegar to drink, and wagged their heads in scorn; and his poverty, and emptiness of all comforts, and want of all supplies in those respects, he was deeply sensible of. And the psalm begins with, 'Blessed is he that considers the poor;' for he was such, and speaks it as glad that any did consider him in that estate.

The third thing instanced in is *wisdom*, which is as large as his authority. He knows all things that are, or fall out within his dominion; which are all things. Kings see not with their own eyes, but the eyes of the Lord run through the whole earth. He knew Paul, where he dwelt, Acts ix., as also that church, Rev. ii. 13, 'I know where thou dwellest,' and so all particulars also; and else, he were not a merciful high priest as man, if he knew not all our particular straits as men. He is the bishop of souls, and knows all his flock himself. As man he shall judge the world, and is ready to do it now, as Peter speaks; and therefore knows all that God hath done, or will do, or all persons to be judged: 'All things are naked before him'—and that *him* is Christ there—'with whom we have to do.'* And all these things he knows, not by the hearsay of angels, that are his messengers sent by him, not to bring him intelligence, but to execute his will; them yet he employs as ministers for his business: but he knows them all in himself, as he did that particular matter then in Mark v. 30.

Now let us see him in his weakness, and emptying himself for a time in this respect. How ignorant was he of many things! As of the day of judgment, and of the fig-tree, &c. Yea, ignorant of letters and learning. This they spake of him that had cause to know him, his kindred that lived in the same place, and therefore name his condition and calling; and they that knew his sisters, Mark vi. 2, 3, spake thus of him, 'From whence hath this man these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to him? Is not this the carpenter,' that hath lived always at his trade, and wrought for us, 'the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?'

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* See Lapide *in locum* out of Molina.

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WITH OTHER OBSERVATIONS UPON ISAIAH L. 10, 11.

'WHEN HE HIDETH HIS FACE, WHO CAN BEHOLD HIM?'—JOB XXXIV. 29.

HONORATISSIMO DOMINO,

ROBERTO,

DOMINO BROOKE, BARONI BROOKE DE BEAUCHAMP COURT,

HEROI

EXIMII ACUMINIS, SUMMI CANDORIS, PIETATIS AC LITERARUM CULTORI,

FAUTORIQUE, OPELLAM HANC,

LABORANTIS CONSCIENTIÆ CONSOLATORIAM, IN PERPETUÆ

OBSERVANTIÆ TESTIMONIUM :

DO. DICO. CONSECRO.

THOMAS GOODWIN.

TO MY MOST HONOURED LORD,

ROBERT,

LORD BROOKE, BARON BROOKE OF BEAUCHAMP COURT,

A HERO,

OF RARE INTELLIGENCE, OF EXTREME CANDOUR,

A CULTIVATOR OF PIETY AND LEARNING HIMSELF, AND A FAVOURER

OF THEM IN OTHERS,

I GIVE, DEDICATE, DEVOTE THIS LITTLE WORK,

DESIGNED TO COMFORT DISTRESSED CONSCIENCES, IN TOKEN OF

UNENDING RESPECT.

THOMAS GOODWIN.

TO THE READER.

THAT which drew these sermons from me, next to thy good, was to right myself. They were first preached eight years since, and some notes thereof were, to say no more, dispersed into the hands of many, to my prejudice. They are here presented as they were preached, with little alteration or addition in method, style, and matter; only, to make up the treatise more complete, I entirely added, against the publishing thereof, that whole discourse about Satan's part and hand in these desertions, beginning at Chap. VI. In handling which, I trust I have not at all incurred that severe increpation of the Apostle against curious speculations about angels, of 'intruding into those things which I have not seen' ground and warrant for in the word. Sure I am, I have endeavoured to follow the school, in their labyrinths herein, no further than I found a clue of Scripture and right reason clearly guiding and warranting my way; without which I account the ways of this old and winding serpent, in his communications to us, to be, as Solomon speaks, 'like the way of a serpent upon a stone,' hidden, and past tracing or finding out. And lest any of the weaker readers, especially those in distress, to whom more speculative and doctrinal discourses, though about things practical, prove usually tedious and unpleasing, should, in reading that piece, be discouraged at the first, my advertisement is, that, if they find that part of the way craggy or tiresome, which I hope they will not, they would divert out of it, and come in again at Chap. XI.; from whence to the end they shall find what is more accommodate to their understanding and conditions, and more practically speaking to their distress. The blessing of Heaven go with it!

THO. GOODWIN.

A CHILD OF LIGHT WALKING IN DARKNESS.

PART I.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This ye shall have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.—ISA. L. 10, 11.

The words paraphrased.

WE have in these words a true believer in his *worst*, and natural men in their *best* condition, set forth together unto our view; and withal the power of true faith, as it alone upholdeth him in the saddest hour of darkness that can befall him, opposed unto and compared with the falseness of their presumptuous confidence, in their greatest security; together with the differing supports of either; the one in ver. 10, the other in ver. 11.

First, take a true believer, who hath had the least beam of the 'light of the glory of God, which shines in the face of Christ,' 2 Cor. iv. 6, let in upon his soul, and his heart so taken with that sight as it became eternally divorced from all things here below, and resolved to adventure all his future hopes of comfort and happiness in the enjoyment of that light of God's countenance alone: which that he may enjoy, he feareth to offend the Lord more than hell, and endeavoureth as truly 'to obey the voice of his servants,' as ever he desires to attain unto that happiness. Think with yourselves, what is the worst thing, next to the eternal loss of God, really and indeed, that can be supposed to befall this man. What worse than to have that cranny, through which he first espied that beam, to be as it were clean shut up, the 'light of God's countenance' withdrawn; yea, all light and appearance to him of his own graces withheld and overclouded; the face of heaven so overcast with darkness that neither sunlight nor starlight appeareth to him, so as he hath no light; yea, further, finds his soul beset and besieged round with all the powers of hell and darkness, and the terrors of the Almighty shot into his soul? And he, thus quite left, walking in this darkness, is filled with strong fears and jealousies that God is not his God; nay, questioning whether he ever will be; yea, apprehending, by the wrath he

feels, God to be become his enemy, Psalm lxxvii. 7. All this is set forth to us here as the very estate of one who 'feareth the Lord and obeys him;' and is comprehended in these words, 'that walketh in darkness, and hath no light.' You see him at his worst.

In which forlorn condition, what is there to be found to relieve and support this man? But only one thing, which is here held forth to him, 'the name of the Lord,' for him to trust and stay himself upon; both that name of God, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 'The Lord God, gracious and merciful,' &c., and that name of Christ which is called, Jer. xxiii. 6, 'Jehovah our righteousness.' Both or either of which, he, by the naked hand of faith laying hold upon, may now make use of as of a staff, (as David compares it, Psalm xxiii. 4,) whilst he thus 'walks in darkness,' and 'through the valley of the shadow of death,' safely to trust and stay himself upon, so as in the end to come forth 'to see light in God's light for evermore,' Psalm xxxvi. 9. You see likewise the prop of his soul in this condition.

On the contrary, let us behold, as all are here called to do, the best and most secure of unregenerate men, encompassed about with all means and supports of confidence and comfort, whether of legal righteousness of their own, which these Jews made boast of, together with the addition of all worldly and outward comforts, both which the prophet here compares to fire and sparks, as preserving light and comfort in them. As, (1.) Let their lives and natural dispositions abound with never so many sparks of legal righteousness, which themselves have kindled: for so he compares all those several acts and performances of natural and acquired righteousness, struck out and educed from the powers of natural principles improved, which make a great blaze in a man's own opinion and esteem; which yet, not proceeding from the Holy Ghost baptizing them as with fire and renewing them, nor from internal principles of regeneration, which Christ compares to fire, Mark ix. 49, are all in God's account but as a sacrifice offered up with strange fire, which was forbidden, and are here said to be of their own kindling. And such were the sparks in the light of which these Jews walked, who 'went about to establish their own righteousness,' Rom. x. 3, and with confidence trusted therein, and not on the name of the Lord. And further, (2.) Let those men be surrounded and encompassed about with the greatest splendour of worldly glory, and abound in all those good things this world can afford them,—the comforts whereof, Solomon, Eccles. vii. 6, in like manner compares to a fire of thorns, and the pleasures of it to the crackling of thorns, as here to sparks,—and let them keep never so good fires to warm and cheer themselves withal, lay on as much every day as shall even encompass them about with sparks; and in the light and confidence of both these let them walk for many years, despising that other poor believer that feareth to be found in his own righteousness, and refuseth to be comforted by any of these: yet, let them know, says Christ, who is brought in as the speaker here, that when they have thus walked presumptuously and securely, and even walked themselves weary, as it is Isa. xl. 31, weary of all their own ways and pleasures, as they will be one day; and then at their deathbeds think to lie down and rest them; they shall lie down indeed, says Christ, and their bed shall be of my making and providing,—'This you shall have of my hand; you shall lie down,'—but 'in a bed of sorrow' and despair, in which they shall lie down never to rise again.

CHAPTER I.

The main proposition and subject of this discourse thence deduced: That a child of God may walk in darkness.—That thereby distress of conscience, and desertion in the want of assurance of justification, is meant, proved.

THIS to be the meaning of the words will more fully appear in opening the several propositions to be delivered out of them, whereof the first and principally intended is this: That one who truly fears God, and is obedient to him, may be in a condition of darkness, and have no light; and he may walk many days and years in that condition.

And herein, further to explain the text, and bottom this great point well upon it, and more particularly to discover what the condition of a child of God, thus in darkness, is, we will first inquire what is meant by walking in darkness here in this place.

First, Walking in darkness is taken in 1 John i. 6, for living in sin and ungodliness—in the commission of known sins or omission of known duties, going on in the works of darkness. But so it is not to be taken here; for Christ would not have encouraged such to trust in God, who is light, and there can be no fellowship between him and such darkness, as the Apostle tells us. Nay, the Holy Ghost reproves such as do 'lean on the Lord' and yet transgress, Mic. iii. 11. And besides, the text speaks of such who for their present condition fear God and are obedient to him, which if they thus walked in darkness they could not be said to do. Neither—

Secondly, Is it to be meant of walking in ignorance, as, John xii. 35, it is taken. For one that hath no light, in that sense, can never truly fear God nor obey him: the 'heart that wanteth knowledge is not good,' says Solomon, Prov. xix. 2; and so to walk in darkness is accompanied with walking 'in vanity of mind,' Eph. iv. 17. But—

Thirdly, He means it of discomfiture and sorrow, as often we find in Scripture darkness to be taken, as Eccles. v. 17; as, on the contrary, light, because it is so 'pleasant a thing to behold,' is put for comfort, Eccles. xi. 7. And that so it is taken here is evident by that which is opposed in the next verse, 'Walk ye in your light, yet ye shall lie down in sorrow.' But—

Fourthly, Of what kind of sorrow, and for what? Whether from outward afflictions, or inward distress of mind and conscience; or, to use Solomon's distinction, whether by reason of man's ordinary infirmities, or of a wounded spirit? That is yet in question. And—

First, It is not to be restrained to outward afflictions only, which are called man's infirmities, as being common to man; which arise from things of this world, or from the men of the world; though to walk in darkness is so taken, Isa. lix. 9, and I will not exclude it here. For, in them also, a man's best support is to trust in God; and it is the safest way to interpret Scriptures in the largest sense which the words and coherence will bear. But yet that cannot be the only or principal meaning of it; for besides what is further to

be said to the contrary, he adds withal, 'and hath no light,' that is, no comfort. Now, as philosophers say, *non dantur puræ tenebræ*, there is no pure darkness without some mixture of light; so we may say, there is not mere or utter darkness caused by outward afflictions: no outward affliction can so universally environ the mind, as to shut up all the crannies of it, so that a man should have no light. And besides, God's people, when they walk in the greatest outward darkness, may have, yea, often use to have, most light in their spirits. But here is such an estate spoken of, such a darkness as hath no light in it. Therefore—

Secondly, It is principally to be understood of the want of inward comfort in their spirits, from something that is between God and them; and so meant of that darkness and terrors which accompany the want of the sense of God's favour. And so darkness is elsewhere taken for inward affliction of spirit and mind, and want of light, in point of assurance, that God is a man's God, and of the pardon of a man's sins; so, Ps. lxxxviii. 6, Heman useth this word to express his distress. And the reasons why it is thus to be understood here are—

First, Because the remedy here prescribed is *faith*; to stay himself upon God, and that as upon *his* God; he puts in *his* God, emphatically, because that is the point he is troubled about, and concerning which he is in darkness, and of which he would have such a one to be persuaded. And that is it which faith, which is propounded here as the remedy, doth in the first place and principally look unto, as its primary aim and object.

Secondly, In the foregoing verses he had spoken of justification, whereby God pardons our sins and accepts our persons; the prophet, or Christ in the person of his elect, (as some,) having expressed his assurance of this: 'God is near that justifies me, who shall condemn?' Which words the Apostle, Rom. viii. 32, 33, doth allege in the point of justification, and to express the triumphing assurance of it; and applies them in the name and person of true believers too. But because there might be some poor souls, who, though truly fearing God, yet might want this assurance; and upon the hearing of this might be the more troubled, because not able to express that confidence which he did; therefore he adds, 'Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and walketh in darkness?' &c.: as if he should have said to such, Though you want the comfortable sense and assurance of this, yet be not discouraged; but do you exercise faith, go out of yourselves, rely upon Christ and that mercy which is to be found in God: you may fear God and want it, and you are to trust in God in the want of it.

Thirdly, These words have a relation also to the 4th verse, where he says, as that God had given him this assurance of his own justification, for his own particular comfort, in those immediately foregoing verses to the text, so there, that God had also given him the 'tongue of the learned, to minister a word of comfort in season to him that is weary and heavy laden:' and thereupon, in this verse, he accordingly shews the blessed condition of such persons as are most weary through long walking in darkness; and withal he discovereth to them the way of getting out of this darkness, and recovering comfort again. And in all the word of God there is not a more comfortable and seasonable word to one in such a condition to be found. All which argues it is spoken of inward darkness and trouble of spirit, and that in point of applying justification, and God to be a man's God.

CHAPTER II.

The particulars of the distress contained in these two phrases: walking in darkness; having no light.

THE second thing to be inquired into is, What is the condition of such a one who is thus in darkness, and who hath no light? Which I will so far discover, as the phrases used here will give light into, by the help of other Scriptures.

1. *First*, he is said to have no light. 'Light,' saith the Apostle, Eph. v. 13, 'is that whereby things are made manifest,' that is, to the sense of sight, to which light properly belongs; and as light and faith are here severed, as you see, so sight also is, in 2 Cor. v. 7, distinguished from faith, which is the evidence of things absent and not seen, Heb. xi. 1. When, therefore, here he says he hath no light, the meaning is, he wants all present sensible testimonies of God's favour to him; he sees nothing that may give sensible present witness of it to him. God's favour, and his own graces, and all the sensible tokens and evidences thereof, which are apprehended by spiritual sight, are become all as absent things, as if they were not, or never had been; that light which ordinarily discovers these as present, he is clean deprived of.

To understand this, we must know that God, to help our *faith*, which, as I said before, is distinguished from *sight*, as we now speak of it, vouchsafeth a threefold light to his people, to add assurance and joy to their faith; which is to faith as a back of steel to a bow, to strengthen it, and made to be taken off or put on to it at God's good pleasure.

(1.) First, the *immediate light of his countenance*, which is a clear, evident beam and revelation of God's favour, immediately testifying that we are his, which is called the sealing of the Spirit, received after believing, Eph. i. 13; which David desired, and rejoiced in more than in all worldly things, Ps. iv. 6, 'Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance;' in which, more or less, in some glimpses of it, some of God's people have the privilege to walk with joy from day to day: Ps. lxxxix. 15, 'They shall walk in the light of thy countenance; in thy name shall they rejoice all day.' And this is here utterly withdrawn; and it may thus come to pass, that the soul, in regard of any sense or sight of this, may be left in that case that Saul really was left in, 1 Sam. xxviii. 15, 'God is departed from me, and answers me not, neither by prophets nor by dreams;' though with this difference, that God was really departed from Saul, but to these but in their own apprehensions: yet so as, for aught they can see of him, God is departed clean from them; answers them neither by prayer, nor by word, nor by conference; they cannot get one good look from him. Such was Jonah's case, chap. ii. 4, 'I am cast out of thy sight;' that is, he could not get a sight of him,—not one smile, not one glance or cast of his countenance, not a beam of comfort,—and so thought himself cast out. And so he dealt with David often, and sometimes a long time together: Ps. xiii. 1, 'How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?' and,

Ps. lxxxix. 46, 'How long,' &c.; even so long as David puts God in remembrance, and pleads how short a time in all he had to live, and complains how in much of that time his face had been hid from him, ver. 47. And the like was Heman's case, and this also long, even from his youth up, Ps. lxxxviii. 14, 15. So from Job, chap. xiii. 24. Yea, and from Christ himself, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

But concerning this you will ask, How can this dealing of his stand with his everlasting love, continued notwithstanding to the soul, that he should deal so with one he loves; but especially how it may stand with the real influence of his grace, powerfully enabling the soul all that while to go on to fear and obey him?

For the first; it may stand with his everlasting love, and God may be his God still, as the text tells us; so, Isa. liv. 8, 'For a moment I have hid my face, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee.' It is but 'hiding his face,' and concealing his love, as David concealed his love from Absalom, when his bowels yearned towards him. And God takes the liberty that other fathers have, to shut his children out of his presence when he is angry. And it is but 'for a moment,'—that is, in comparison of eternity,—though haply it should be thus with him during a man's whole life; and he therefore takes liberty to do it, because he hath such an eternity of time to reveal his kindness in; time enough for kisses and embraces, and to pour forth his love in.

And for the second; the real gracious influences and effects of his favour may be continued, upholding, strengthening, and carrying on the soul still to obey and fear him, whilst he yet conceals his favour. For, when Christ complained, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' when as great an eclipse in regard of the light of God's countenance was upon his spirit as was upon the earth, yet he never more obeyed God, was never stronglier supported, than at that time, for then he was obeying to the death. Like as we see that when the sun is eclipsed, though the earth wants the light of it, yet not the influence thereof; for the metals which are engendered in the bottom of the earth are concocted by the sun; so as though the light of the sun comes not to them, yet the influence and virtue of it doth, and altereth and changeth them. So doth God's favour visit men's hearts in the power, heat, and vigorous influence of his grace, when the light and comfort of it doth not, but is intercluded. *Deus se communicat, vel quâ beatus, vel quâ sanctus; quâ beatus, gaudium et gloriam; quâ sanctus, gratiam: utrumque voluntariè, ideoque non utrumque simul necessario.*

(2.) The second light which God vouchsafeth his people ordinarily to help and eke out their faith, is the *sight and comfort of their own graces*, unto which so many promises belong; as, of their love to his people, fear of his name, desire to obey him. So that often when the sun is set, yet starlight appears; that is, though that other, the immediate presence and evidence of his favour, shines not on the soul, yet his graces therein appear, as tokens of that his love: so as the soul knows that there is a sun still, that gives light to these stars, though it sees it not; as in the night we know that there is a sun in another horizon, because the stars, we see, have their light from it, and we are sure that it will arise again to us.

Now a soul that hath true grace in it, and goes on to obey God, may also want light to see these his graces, and look upon his own heart as empty of all. And as they in the storm, Acts xxvii. 20, so he in temptation may come to have 'neither sunlight nor starlight;' no light, as in the text. Thus, Isa. lxiii. 17, the church there complains that God had hardened them

from his fear: they were afraid, feeling their hearts so hard, that the fear of God was wanting; which yet was there, for they complain of the want of it.

(3.) But yet, thirdly, though he want the present light of God's countenance, and the sight of present grace, yet he may have *a comfortable remembrance of what once before he had* still left, and so long is not utterly left in darkness. Therefore further know, that the state of one that fears God and obeys him may be such as he may have no comfortable light or remembrance of what grace, &c., formerly he had, 2 Pet. i. 9. One that hath true grace in him only lacks the exercise of it,—for I take it that place is to be understood of a regenerate man, because he was 'purged from sin,'—and is now said to lack grace because he doth not use it; for *idem est non habere, et non uti*, a man is said not to have that which he doth not use when he ought to use it, especially in things whose worth lies wholly in use and employment, for it is as good as if he had it not. Now, such a man may fall into such a blindness that he 'cannot see afar off,' and so forgets his former assurance, 'that he was purged from his old sins;' yea, it may be, calls all into question. Thus David, in Ps. xxx. 6, 7, though his heart was but even now, a little before, 'full of joy' and assurance of God's favour, yet God did but 'hide his face,' and all was gone; 'I was troubled,' says he. He was thus blind, and could not see what was but a little past him, as it is with men in a mist.

And the reason of these two last assertions is as evident as the experience thereof. For graces in us shine but with a borrowed light, as the stars do, with a light borrowed from the sun. So that unless God will shine secretly, and give light to thy graces, and irradiate them, thy graces will not appear to comfort thee, nor be at all a witness of God's favour to assure thee. For our spirit, that is, our graces, never witness alone; but if God's Spirit joineth not in testimony therewith, it is silent: 'The Spirit of God witnesseth with our spirits,' Rom. viii. 16. Now therefore, when God hath withdrawn his testimony, then the testimony of our hearts, and of our own graces, hath no force in it.

But you will say, Can a man have the exercise of grace and not know it? fear God, &c., and not discern it?

Yes; and some graces may then be as much exercised in the heart as at any other time. He may fear God as truly and as much as ever, and yet this fear have no light in it to discover itself to him; it may be in the heart, in *esse et operari*, when not in *cognosci*,—it may have a being and a working there, when not in thy apprehension.

The reason is, because, as the influence of God's favour may be really in the heart, when the sense, sight, and light of it is withdrawn, as was said before; so the power of grace may in like manner be in the heart when the light and comfort thereof is wanting. And although it is true that every man having the power of reflecting upon his own actions, can discern what thoughts are in him and what affections, and can tell, for the matter of them, what he thinks on, that he puts his trust, and that he is grieved, &c.: but yet so as he may still question whether those thoughts be acts of true and unfeigned faith, and whether those affections of sorrow for sin, &c., be sanctified affections, holy, and genuine, and spiritual affections; and the reason of the difference is, because though the natural 'spirit which is in a man knows the things of a man,' as the apostle hath it, 1 Cor. ii. 11 (that is, his own thoughts, &c., understanding them physically, as they are acts of a man), yet what is the true goodness of them morally, in discerning this,

the 'spirit of a man is deceitful, and cannot know it,' Jer. xvii. 9, without the supernatural light of the Spirit of God, who as he is the giver and actor of that grace in us, so 'is given of God that we might know the things which are given us of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 12. 'Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright,' says the Psalmist. Grace, and the exercise of it, is the seed which they continually scatter; but light and joy is the crop that is to be reaped. The seed often lies hid long, though it will come up in the end. Thus light or joy may be severed from grace; and the comfort of it from the power of it.

2. Secondly, let us further consider the other phrase, and what is intimated thereby to be his condition, when, as it is said, he walks in darkness:—

(1.) First, to walk in darkness implies to be in doubt whither to go; so John xii. 35, 'He that walks in darkness knows not whither he goes.' And thus the soul of one that fears God may be filled with doubts whether God will ever be merciful to him, yea or no, and not know what God means to do with him, whether he shall go to heaven or hell. Ps. lxxvii. 7–9, 'Will the Lord be merciful?' which speeches are spoken doubtingly; for, ver. 10, he says, 'this was his infirmity,' to call this into question. So Heman, Ps. lxxxviii. 5, 6, 11, 12: he thought himself as one that was in hell, 'free among the dead,' that is, as one admitted free into the company of them there, ver. 5; free of that company, as you use to say, and of the number of those 'whom God no more remembered:' in such darkness was he, ver. 6. And to raise him out of that condition was a thing he doubted whether God would ever do, ver. 10–12: 'Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall thy wonders be declared in the grave?' that is, Did God ever shew mercy to one that was in the same state that they in hell are in? which is my state now; yea, so as to be out of hope. So Lam. iii. 18, 'My hope is perished from the Lord.'

(2.) Secondly, those in darkness are apt to stumble at everything. So Isa. lix. 10; one effect of darkness, mentioned there, is to 'stumble at noonday.' So take a soul that is left in darkness, and it will stumble at all it hears out of the word, either in conference or at sermons; all it reads, all promises it meets with, it is more discouraged by them. Oh, think they, that there should be such glorious promises, and not belong to us! Such a one misapplies and misinterprets all God's dealings and the Scriptures against himself, and 'refuseth comfort,' as Ps. lxxvii. 2; yea, and, as at the 3d verse, when he 'remembers God, he is troubled.'

(3.) Thirdly, darkness is exceeding terrible and full of horror. When children are in the dark, they think they see fearful sights; it is therefore called the 'horror of darkness,' Gen. xv. 12. So his soul here may be filled with fears and terrors from God's wrath, and of God's being an enemy to him. Heman was almost distracted and out of his wits with terrors, Ps. lxxxviii. 15. So the church thought, Lam. iii.; yea, and concluded it for certain that God was her enemy: 'Surely he is turned against me,' ver. 3.

CHAPTER III.

The efficient causes of this distress.—First, the Spirit; whether he hath any hand therein, and how far.

HAVING thus explicated and proved this, that this doth and may befall one who truly fears the Lord, for the more full clearing of it I will further shew—

I. The efficient causes;

II. The cases wherein;

III. The ends for which, God leaves his children in such distresses.

I. For the efficient causes of this so woeful, desperate, dark condition of God's child; they are three which have a hand in it:—

1. God's Spirit.

2. A man's own guilty and fearful heart.

3. Satan.

1. For God's Spirit. Although he hath a hand in some part of this disquietness, yet we must take heed how we put upon him any of those doubts and desperate fears and conclusions whereby the child of God calls his state into question. For the Spirit is not the direct efficient, or positive cause of them.

And to this end we may consider that known place, Rom. viii. 15, 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again, but the spirit of adoption;' the right understanding of which will also prevent an objection. For some have alleged this place, as if the child of God, after he had once the Spirit, sealing adoption to him, could never after fall into apprehension of bondage—that is, into fears of eternal damnation—any more, or of being bound over for hell; and that this can befall him but once, and that at his first conversion.

But if we mark the words well, the Apostle affirmeth not that fears of bondage can never befall God's child again, but his scope is to shew that the Spirit which we have received, having been once become the spirit of adoption, that Spirit is never after again the spirit of bondage to us, nor the cause of such fears. Indeed, at first conversion, and before he did witness adoption, he then revealed our estate to us to be an estate of bondage; which he then doth in love, to drive us out of it; and then indeed he was a 'spirit of bondage:' to which he hath reference when he says, 'to fear again,' because he was once such to them, and such the Holy Ghost then might be, and then witness to them that their estates were damnable; for then it was a truth, in that they had lived in an estate of bondage, whereunto damnation was immediately due; and had they died in it, had certainly fallen upon them. But when once, by making a man a son, he hath become the spirit of adoption to him, then if ever he should put him into such apprehensions and fears again, he should witness an untruth. Therefore, for the comfort of them and all believers, he tells them that he never crosseth nor reverseth his testimony of adoption, but his office is to be ready as a witness to seal

to it. But yet, though the judge doth not condemn any more, yet the jailor may trouble and affright us, and our own hearts may condemn us, 1 John iii. 21. God may give Satan leave to cast us into prison, to clap bolts upon us again, and to become a lying spirit of bondage to us, as he became a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets; and he may give up our hearts to be fettered with 'the cords of our own sins,' Prov. v. 22, and to be ensnared with its own inventions, and fears, and jealousies.

For a more distinct understanding of this, to manifest how it comes to pass that all this befalls God's child, I will shew how far the Holy Ghost proceedeth in it, and puts forth his hand towards it; and what Satan's work is, where he strikes in, and our own hearts, to work further and deeper distress than the Holy Ghost by himself alone intended. For unto these three several hands is the whole to be ascribed, and the works of God's Spirit, and his concurrence therein, carefully to be severed from Satan's, as light from darkness at the first.

Thus far, then, the Spirit of God may concur in this darkness that befalls his child:—

(1.) *Privatively.* He may suspend his testimony, and the execution of his office of witnessing adoption; he may withdraw his comfortable presence, and hide himself for a moment, and conceal his love, as other fathers will sometimes do; as David did, when yet his heart was towards Absalom. He may not admit him to see his face, he may shut a son out of doors, when yet he doth not cast him off. He may 'retain their sins,' as Christ's expression is, John xx. 23,—that is, call in the patent of his pardon which he had passed under his hand and seal, 'in earth,' that is, in their own consciences; take it out of their hands and custody, and call for it home again into the pardon-office 'in heaven,' Matt. xviii. 18, and there keep it. And also when Satan comes and gives in a false witness and evidence, and our own hearts thereupon likewise condemn us, the Holy Ghost may stand by, as it were, silent, and say nothing to the contrary, but forbear to contradict Satan by any loud testimony or secret rebuking him, as he doth at other times; as Zech. iii. 1, 2.

(2.) *Positively.* He may further proceed:—

[1.] To reveal and represent God as angry with his child for such and such sins formerly committed, and make him sensible thereof; not barely by concealing his love, but by making impressions of his wrath upon his conscience immediately, and not by outward crosses only. Thus, Isa. lvii. 17, 18, God not only 'hid himself and was wroth,'—that is, expressed his wrath by hiding himself,—but 'I smote him and was wroth;' and ver. 16, he contended and was wroth,'—that is, fought against him as an enemy, as Isa. lxiii. 10, and this with his wrath upon his spirit. For it follows that the spirit was ready to fail, and the soul which he had made. So as it was the spirit which was the white God shot at and wounded, and that so deep that it was ready to fail and come to nothing: which Solomon calls by way of distinction 'a wounded spirit,' which who can bear? and differenceth it from all other afflictions upon the outward man, which strike the spirit but through the clothes of the body mediately; for, says he, 'the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity'—that is, all such outward afflictions wherein it suffers but by way of sympathy and compassion. But when the spirit itself is laid bare and naked, and wounded immediately by God's wrath, which only can reach it and wound it, who can bear this? Thus towards Heman, God did not only hide his face from him, Ps. lxxxviii. 14, but 'his fierce wrath went over him,' and 'thy terrors,' says he, 'cut me off,' ver 16; not wounded him only,

but even cut him off. And such impressions of immediate wrath, as expressions and effects of God's anger, the Holy Ghost may make upon the spirit of his child. For it is a truth that God is angry and wroth with them when they sin; which anger he may make known, not only by dumb signs in outward crosses and effects, but by an immediate witnessing, and plain and express speaking so much to their consciences, and making them to feel so much, by scalding drops of his hot displeasure let fall thereon. And as other fathers shew their anger by whipping the bodies of their children, upon this ground, as says the apostle, because they are the 'fathers of our flesh,' Heb. xii. 9; so, for the like reason, may God shew his anger and chastise his children by lashing their spirits: for he is the 'Father of our spirits,' as he speaks in the same place. And likewise our spirits, and the very 'bones and marrow' of them, do lie 'open and naked to him with whom we have to do;' and his word and Spirit being 'quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,' are able 'to divide,' and cut even to the 'bones and marrow,' as the same author speaks, Heb. iv. 12, 13. Yet withal, so as when he expresseth his wrath thus upon their consciences, he doth not witness that this is an eternal wrath which he hath conceived against them; for it is but a temporary displeasure, 'it is but for a moment,' as Isaiah speaks, the indignation of a father; nor is it a wrath which revenging justice hath stirred in him, but fatherly affection, Heb. xii. 6. And though the Spirit tells them that God is displeased, yet never that they are accursed; that is a false collection made out of it. Yet—

[2.] The Holy Ghost may proceed yet further herein; so far as to bring forth, and shew him, and shake over him the rod of his eternal wrath, especially when he hath provoked Christ by presumptuous sins already, and to prevent his going on frowardly in the way of his heart. And this, both by presenting to them and setting on all those threatenings, which do hypothetically and conditionally threaten, even to believers, eternal damnation: such as that which we find, Rom. viii. 13, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye,' even you believers, 'shall die;' for there is a truth in all such threatenings, so conditionally propounded, which reacheth God's dearest children, under a condition, and with relation to going on in sin. To stop him and prevent him in which, when he is agoing on frowardly in the way of his heart, the Holy Spirit may bring home such threatenings to him, with respect to such a course as he is entering into, and accordingly stir up the fear of that damnation thus threatened, if he should go on in those sins he hath begun to commit. But to apply threatenings of eternal damnation simply to his person, as that thou shalt die eternally, this the Holy Ghost doth not speak to the heart of a believer, when he is a believer. And again also, the Holy Ghost may represent to him and mind him of all those examples of men in whom, for their going on in sin, 'his soul hath had no pleasure,' Heb. x. 39; and of God's dealings with them,—as how he sware against many of the Israelites, for their provocations of him, 'that they should never enter into his rest;' and how he rejected Esau for the despisal of his birthright,—and all this with this end, to startle and awaken him; and with this intimation, that for such and such sins God might in like manner deal with him. For these and the like examples doth the Spirit of God set before the believing Hebrews, Heb. iii., xii.; and the believing Corinthians, 1 Cor. x. 5–13, to keep them in fearfulness to offend. But to apply any such examples absolutely unto them, so as to say, Thus God intends to do with thee for such and such sins, and that God will never be merciful, this the Holy Ghost doth not speak to a believer's heart.

CHAPTER IV.

How Satan and our hearts increase this darkness by false conclusions from the Spirit's work, illustrated by the like in the illumination of temporaries.—The Spirit's work in both compared.

AND now the Spirit of God having proceeded thus far himself in causing such darkness and terrors of conscience in them that fear him; Satan and their own hearts, unto which he may and doth often further also leave them, may take occasion from these dispensations of the Holy Ghost, which are all holy, righteous, and true, to draw forth false and fearful conclusions against themselves and their estates, and start amazing doubts and fears of their utter want of grace, and lying under the curse and threatenings of eternal wrath at the present, yea, and further, of eternal rejection for the future, and that God will never be merciful; and so lay them lower, and cast them into a further darkness and bondage than the Holy Ghost was cause of, or intended: misinterpreting and perverting all these his righteous proceedings, as interpreting that withdrawing his light and presence, and hiding himself, to be a casting them off, (thus Heman, Ps. lxxxviii. 14;) so, likewise, misconstruing that temporary wrath, chastising and wounding their spirits for the present, to be no other than the impressions and earnest of God's eternal vengeance; and arguing, from their being under wrath, themselves to be children of wrath; and misapplying the application of all those threatenings of eternal damnation made by the Spirit, but in relation and under a condition of such and such courses for the future, to be absolute against their persons, and to speak their present estate. And because such examples of men cast off are presented to them, to shew them what advantage God might take against them; they, mistaking, think they read their own destiny laid before them in them, and conclude that God will deal so with them. And thus the Apostle says of sin, Rom. vii. 11, that 'sin taking occasion by the commandment,'—he misunderstanding the scope of it when a Pharisee,—'it deceived him, and therefore slew him;' and yet 'the commandment is holy, just, and good,' ver. 12. So Satan and our hearts, by occasion of these dealings of the Spirit, which are righteous and true, as himself is, who is the Spirit of truth and leads into truth, do deceive believers, and lay them in their apprehensions 'among the slain, whom God remembereth no more,' as Heman speaks, Ps. lxxxviii. 5.

And as in these, so in other works and dispensations of God's Spirit, it is ordinary for Satan and our hearts to practise the like delusions and false conclusions upon them. To instance in those more common and inferior works of the Spirit on the hearts of men, not as yet savingly regenerated: the Spirit enlightening them, together with impressions of joy, and a taste of sweetness in the promises of the gospel, and of salvation revealed therein, which, under a condition of true repentance and conversion, the Spirit of

God doth make the offer and tender of known unto their hearts. Thus he wrought upon the stony ground, and in the Jews by John's ministry, John v. 35; which light, and taste, and revelation of this conditional proffer, tending in a way unto salvation, by alluring their hearts to seek it, they often through Satan's abuse of this good work, and the self-flattery of their own hearts, do too hastily take to be that grace which accompanies salvation, (ἐχόμενα τῆς σωτηρίας,) or which hath salvation annexed to it; from which the Apostle, by that very expression, Heb. vi. 9, doth difference those enlightenings mentioned ver. 4. They thus mistaking these works precursory to grace, even as the Jews mistook John, that was sent but before to prepare the way for Christ, to be that very true Christ that was to come into the world, and misunderstanding the intendment of God's most blessed Spirit in such his dealings, they make up too hasty a conclusion not meant by the Spirit in those premises.

And I instance in these the rather, because these his dispensations of desertion, which we have in hand, towards them already regenerated, and those forementioned visitations towards such as often attain not to regeneration, are in an opposite way of comparison exceeding parallel, and much alike in the dispensations themselves,—as well as in the differing false conclusions which are drawn from either,—and do therefore exceedingly illustrate the one the other; God withdrawing himself as much in their sense from those who are in covenant with him, as he draws near unto and visits their hearts from on high who are as yet strangers to him. The needle of God's favour and love varying as much, that I may so allude, towards hell in their compass who shall be saved, as it doth heavenward in the other, many of whom arrive not thither. For as they are brought nigh to the kingdom of heaven, as Christ told him, Matt. xii. 34; so of true believers it may be said, that their souls do often draw near to hell in their own sense and apprehension, and 'the pains of hell do take hold upon them.' And as the other are enlightened, as Balaam was, so they are left to walk in darkness and see no light; and do taste of that wrath which the law threatens, as those other taste the goodness of that salvation the gospel offereth. God, out of a temporary anger, chastising them for a moment, as with a temporary favour he shineth upon the other. That as they 'for a season rejoice in that light,' John v. 35, so God's dearest children 'may be for a season in much heaviness,' as the Apostle speaks, 1 Pet. i. 6, and 'walk in darkness.' And as the similitude of the dealings themselves runs thus far along in a parallel line of comparison, so it holds in the false apprehensions which Satan and our hearts do make out of both. And the cause of the mistake in each is also alike. For God's dealings with those temporary believers being so like to those dealings towards such as receive a state of adoption from him, they thence too hastily conclude their acceptance unto life. And, on the contrary, God's dealings with these temporary despairers, as I may so call them, being so like in their sense to his proceedings with those he cuts off for ever, they, in like manner, as hastily conclude ('I said in my haste,' says David) their eternal rejection. Only in the issue they prove unlike: these desertions tending but to the present discomfort of true believers through their frailty; but in the other, through their own willing neglect, their enlightenings turn to their destruction.

So as, to conclude, we must warily sever the work of God's Spirit herein from that of Satan and our own hearts, not attributing such desperate conclusions to the Spirit. Thus that depth of sorrow wherewith that humbled

Corinthian was well-nigh 'swallowed up,' 2 Cor. ii. 7, is ascribed u
Satan, when, ver. 11, it is made and termed one of his devices, wh
word doth in part refer to the Corinthian's sorrow. Thus David also i
putes that his questioning, Ps. lxxvii., 'whether God would be merciful'
him, ver. 7, unto his own heart; 'this is my infirmity,' says he, ver. 10.
as the blame herein is to be divided between Satan and our hearts.—
speak more particularly of either.

CHAPTER V.

How our own hearts are the causes of this darkness.—The principles therein which are the causes of it.

2. THAT our own hearts should be the causes and producers of such distress and darkness, when the Holy Ghost thus deals with us, is at all no wonder; because—

(1.) As we are creatures, there is such a weakness and infirmity in us, as David speaks; by reason of which, if God doth but hide himself and withdraw his presence, which supporteth us in comfort, as in being, we are ready presently to fall into these fears of ourselves. The Psalmist saith of all the creatures, 'Thou hidest thy face, and they are troubled,' Ps. civ. 29; and this by reason of their weakness and dependence upon God. And no less, but far greater, is the dependence of the new creature upon God's face and presence; that it cannot be alone and bear up itself, but it fails if God hide himself, as Isaiah speaks, chap. lvii. Especially now in this life, during the infancy thereof, whilst it is a child, as God speaks of Ephraim, Hos. xi. 1; then it cannot stand or go alone, unless God 'bear it up in his arms, and teach it to go,' as he speaks there, ver. 1–3. And then also, as children left alone in the dark are afraid of bugbears, and they know not what, and are apt to stumble and fall, which is by reason of their weakness; so is it with the new creature in its childhood here in this life. It was my infirmity, says David; and again, 'Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled,' Ps. xxx. 7.

There is not only such a weakness in us as we are creatures; but—

(2.) Also an innate darkness in our spirits as we are sinful creatures. Since the fall, our hearts of themselves are nothing but darkness, and therefore no wonder if when God but draws the curtains, and shuts up the light from us, that our hearts should engender and conceive such horrid fears and doubts. Thus, in 2 Cor. iv. 6, the Apostle compareth this native darkness of our hearts unto that chaos and lump of darkness which, at the first creation, covered the face of the deep, when he says that 'God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness,'—he referreth to the first creation, Gen. i. 1, 2,—'hath shined into our hearts,' even of us apostles, 'to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' So that no longer than God continues to shine, either the light of comfort or of grace, no longer do our hearts, even of us believers, retain light in them. And if at any time he withhold that light of comfort in his face, when yet he continueth an influence of grace, then so far do our hearts presently return to their former darkness; and then doth that vast womb of darkness conceive and form all those fears and doubts within itself. Considering withal that our hearts are a great deep also, so deep in darkness and deceitfulness as no plummet can fathom them; 'deceitful above all things, who can know it?' Jer. xvii. 9. Darkness covereth not the face of this deep only, but it is darkness to the

bottom, throughout darkness. No wonder then, if when the Spirit ceaseth to move upon this deep with beams of light, it cast us into such deeps and darkness as Heman, complaining, speaks of, Ps. lxxxviii. 6, and frameth in itself such hideous apprehensions and desperate conclusions of a man's own estate.

(3.) Especially seeing there is so much strength of carnal and corrupt reason in men, ready to forge and invent strong reasons and arguments to confirm those sad fears and darkened apprehensions; and those drawn from those dealings of God's Spirit mentioned. For as it is said of the Gentiles, that when 'their foolish hearts were darkened,'—that is, when left and given over to their own natural darkness,—'they became vain in their imaginations,' or (as the original hath it) in their reasonings, λογισμοῖς, Rom. i. 21; and this even in those things which God had clearly revealed in his works to the light of nature, of which that place speaks: so may it be said even of those who have been most enlightened, that their hearts are apt to become much more vain in their reasonings about, and in the judging of their own estates before God, out of his word and dealings with them, if God once leaves them unto darkness. And this that great caveat given to professors, James i. 22, gives to understand, when they are exhorted to take heed that 'in hearing the word' they be not found 'deceiving themselves by false reasonings.' So the original, παραλογιζόμενοι ἑαυτούς, renders it; which is as if we should say, false-reasoning themselves: as we use to say, in a like phrase of speech, befooling themselves. And this is spoken of judging of their own estates, concerning which men are more apt, through the distempers and prejudices of self-love, to make (to speak in that phrase of the Apostle) false syllogisms, and to misconclude, than about any other spiritual truth whatever. And as men that want true faith, the unsound hearers of the word, of whom the Apostle there speaks, are thus apt, through carnal reason misapplying the word they hear, to frame and draw from thence, as he insinuates, multitudes of false reasons to uphold and maintain to themselves a good opinion of their estates: so, on the contrary, in those who have true faith, all that carnal reason, which remains in a great measure unsubdued in them, is as apt to raise and forge as strong objections against the work of faith begun, and as peremptorily to conclude against their present estates by the like misapplication of the word, but especially by misinterpreting God's dealings towards them. And they being sometimes led by sense and reason, whilst they walk in darkness, they are apt to misinterpret God's mind towards them rather by his works and dispensations, which they see and feel, than by his word, which they are to believe. This we see in Gideon, Judges vi., who, because God wrought not miracles, as he had formerly for his people, but had delivered them into their enemies' hands, from thence reasoneth against the message of the angel, (Christ himself,) who had told him, 'The Lord is with thee,' ver. 12. But he objects, 'Oh, my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? Where be all the miracles which our fathers told us of? But now the Lord hath forsaken us,' &c. This we may also see in Asaph, or what other holy penman of the 73d Psalm; his heels were well-nigh tripped up in the dark: 'My feet were almost gone,' says he, ver. 2,—that is, from keeping his 'standing by faith,' as the apostle speaks, Rom. v.,—and this by an argument framed by carnal reason, from God's dispensation of outward prosperity to wicked men, but, on the contrary, 'chastening of him every morning,' with outward afflictions, as the opposition doth there import. And how peremptory is he in his conclusion thence deduced? 'Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain,' ver. 13; and what reason hath he? 'For all the

day long I have been plagued,' &c., ver. 14. He thought his reason strong and irrefragable, else he would not have been so concludent: 'Verily,' &c. But what would this man have said and thought if he had been in Heman's condition, or in Job's or David's? If in those shallows of outward troubles, which are common to man, his faith could not find footing, but he was well-nigh carried away with the common stream and error of wicked men, to have condemned himself and the 'generation of the righteous,' ver. 15; how would his faith have been overborne 'if all God's waves and billows had gone over him?' as David complains, Psalm xlii. 7. How would he have sunk in Heman's deeps, Psalm lxxxviii.? or in David's, Psalm lxix. 2, 'I sink in the deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me?' speaking of such 'waters as came in unto his soul,' ver. 1, even the floods of God's immediate wrath breaking in upon his conscience, overflowing the inward man, and not the outward only. How much more peremptorily would he have concluded against himself if this had been his condition? As indeed they, and many others of the generation of God's children have done, when they have lain under and walked in such distresses.

And the reason of all this is as evident as the experience of it:—

[1.] In general; reason is of itself a busy principle, that will be prying into, and making false glosses upon all God's matters as well as our own, and trying its skill in arguing upon all his dealings with us. Thus Jeremiah must needs be reasoning with God about his dispensations towards wicked men, chap. xii. 1, 2; and Job, of his dealings with himself, chap. xiii. 3. And reason being likewise the supreme principle in us by nature, and our highest difference as we are men, therefore no wonder if, when we are left to ourselves to 'walk in darkness,' we 'walk as men,' as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. x. 3; and, to use Solomon's words, do lean to our own wisdom, Prov. iii. 5, even because it is our own, and was brought up with us. It is our great Ahithophel, and, as David says of him, 'our guide, with whom we have taken so much sweet counsel' in all our worldly and politic affairs. In which only we should make use of its advice; but we too often take it into the sanctuary with us, and 'walk in company with it into the house of God,' (to allude to what David says there, Psalm lv. 13, 14;) that is, we suffer it to meddle in matters that pertain to the sanctuary, and to debate and conclude of our spiritual and eternal estates, as well as of our temporal. And, which is worse, we are opinionative of its judgment therein: 'I thought,' says Asaph, in that forementioned psalm, 'to know this,' ver. 16,—that is, he thought to have comprehended and reached God's mind, in those his dispensations, by the discussions of reason, and so to have concluded rightly from them; whereas, 'after he had gone into the sanctuary,' ver. 17, with faith alone, and thereby consulted with the word, he confesseth his own wisdom and best reason to have been as ignorant of God's meaning, and of those rules he proceedeth by, in those his dispensations towards his children, 'even as a beast' (ver. 22) is of those principles which men walk by, or the intentions they have in their ways. If reason then, when it is so utterly unskilful and mistaken in the premises, will yet be exercising and trying its faculty in reasoning from them, no wonder if the conclusions thence deduced be so wide and wild; and yet, with Asaph, we think we know this.

[2.] But more particularly; carnal reason is the most desperate enemy to faith of all other principles in man. For until faith be wrought, it is the most supreme principle; but then faith deposeth and subjecteth it, and afterwards doth often contradict it; yea, excludes it, as unskilful in its matters,

from being of its counsel. And so deep and desperate is this enmity against faith, that look, what is the most especial work and business of faith, which is to alter our estates before God, and put us into a state of justification and to assure us of it, therein it shews a more peculiar enmity against faith, by opposing it in that work of it more than in any other. This enmity shews itself both before and after faith is wrought, and the one illustrates the other. For as before faith was wrought, carnal reason shews its opposition, by using the utmost of its strength to persuade a man of the goodness of his estate, though without faith; thereby to prevent the entrance of faith and our seeking after it at all, as not needful to change our estates or to justify us, and thus would keep it wholly out; and therefore, in the first working of faith, the Holy Ghost brings faith in by force of open arms, as a conqueror casting down all those strongholds and reasonings—λογισμοὺς, as the word is, 2 Cor. x. 5—which carnal reason had been long a-building and a-fortifying, and so erecteth faith a throne upon the ruins of them all: thus, in like manner, after faith is thus wrought, all that carnal reason which is left unsubdued doth, out of a further revenge of such an overthrow, and with a greater degree of enmity, oppose faith still; only it diverts the war, now mustering up new forces, and turneth all the great ordnance a clean contrary way; namely, to persuade a man, by all the objections it can raise, of the badness of his estate now, as before of the goodness of it; hereby to blaspheme the great work of faith in justifying of us. And also because that, next to justifying us, the office and errand of faith is to settle in our hearts peace with God, and a persuasion of our being in his favour, as Rom. v. 1; therefore doth carnal reason bend the utmost of its power and acumen to persuade upon all occasions, by all the most specious and seeming arguments it can start and suggest, that God is not at peace with us, nor as yet reconciled to us; merely to contradict faith in what is the principal point it would persuade us of.

So that as in men, whilst unregenerate, carnal reason endeavours by false reasonings to preserve a good opinion of their estates in them; in like manner, the very same principle of carnal reason, continuing its opposition to faith, doth as much persuade to a bad opinion of their estates when they are once regenerated.

[3.] And to conclude this; if in any condition that befalls God's child carnal reason hath the advantage and upper ground of faith, it is now when it is in 'the valley of the shadow of death,' as David speaks, when it walks in darkness, and hath no light. A condition that doth afford a most complete topic for carnal reason to frame objections out of; when, in respect of God's dealings with him, there is a seeming conjunction of all bad aspects threatening perdition and destruction; when faith is under so great an eclipse, and is left to fight it out alone in darkness, and hath no second: when, on the contrary, carnal reason and our dark hearts, which are led by sense, are possessed with the sense, the deepest and most exquisite sense, and impressions of (that which the heart is most jealous of) God's sorest wrath and displeasure, and that felt and argued, not mediately and afar off, by consequence from outward afflictions, but immediately from God's own hand. Thou always hast suspected, says carnal reason, that thou wert a child of wrath, and that thou and God were enemies, but now thou findest it put out of question, and that from God's own mouth, 'who speaketh' grievous things 'against thee,' Jer. xxxi. 20: thou hast it also under his own hand, for, lo, 'he writeth bitter things against thee,'—that is, in thy conscience,—as Job speaks, chap. xiii. 26, and 'holdeth thee for an enemy,' ver. 24; and whips

thee with the same rod of his immediate wrath and displeasure wherewith he lasheth those that are cut from his hand, and whom he remembereth no more, but are now in hell, as Heman speaks. A time also this is when this present sense of wrath so distempers, and, to use Heman's words, distracts the mind, that it cannot listen to faith, which speaks of nothing too but of what it sees not; even as the people of Israel could not attend to Moses's message of deliverance, through the anguish of their present bondage, Exod. vi. 9. So as no wonder if then carnal reason be most busy, and takes this advantage to frame and suggest the strongest objections to the soul whilst it is in this distemper.

(4.) Add unto all this, that as there is such strength of corrupt reason which is thus opposite to faith, so that there are many other principles of corrupt affections in the heart which join and take part with carnal reason in all this its opposition against faith, and which set it a-work and do back it as much in persuading God's children that their estates are nought, as in securing men unregenerate that their estates are good; and the hand of self-love, which bribeth and biaseth carnal reason, especially in judging of our estates, is found as deep in the one as in the other;—and this doth yet give further light to this point in hand. For look, as before faith is wrought, self-flattery, which is one branch of self-love, bribeth and setteth carnal reason a-work to plead the goodness of their estates to men unregenerate, and causeth all such false reasons to take with them which tend to persuade them to think well of themselves: so when once faith is wrought, jealousy, and suspiciousness, and incredulity,—which are other as great sprigs of pride and self-love in us as the former, which do begin to sprout and shew themselves when that other is lopped off, and which do grow up together with the work of faith,—these do edge and sharpen the wit of carnal reason to argue and wrangle against the work of faith and grace begun; and all such objections as carnal reason doth find out against it are pleasing and plausible to these corrupt principles, for they are thereby nourished and strengthened.

And the reason why such jealousies and suspicions, &c.,—which are such contrary dispositions unto self-flattery, which swayed our opinions of our estates before,—should thus arise and be started up in the heart upon the work of faith, and be apt rather to prevail now after faith, is, [1.] because that in the work of humiliation, which prepares for faith, all those strongholds of carnal reason being demolished which upheld self-flattery, and that false good opinion of a man's estate, and those mountainous thoughts of presumption as then laid low, a man is for ever put out of conceit with himself, as of himself. At which time also, [2.] he was so thoroughly and feelingly convinced of the heinousness of sin, which before he slighted, and of the greatness and multitude of his sins, that he is apt now, instead of presuming as before, to be jealous of God, lest he might have been so provoked as never to pardon him; and is accordingly apt to draw a misinterpretation of all God's dealings with him to strengthen that conceit. And, [3.] having through the same conviction, the infinite error and deceitfulness of his heart before, in flattering him and judging his estate good when it is most accursed, so clearly discovered and discerned, he thereby becomes exceeding jealous, and afraid of erring on that hand still, and so is apt to lend an ear to any doubt and scruple that is suggested. Especially, [4.] he being withal made apprehensive both of that infinite danger to his eternal salvation there may be in nourishing a false opinion of the goodness of his estate, if it should prove otherwise; because such a false conceit keeps a man from saving faith, whereas to cherish the contrary error in judging his estate bad, when it is in truth good, tends

but to his present discomfort: so as he thinks it safer to err on that hand than the other. And, [5.] being also sensible of what transcendent concernment his eternal salvation is of, which he before slighted, this rouseth suspicion, which in all matters of great consequence and moment is always doubting and inquisitive, and also keeps it waking, which before lay asleep. And all these being now startled and stirred up, do not only provoke carnal reason unsatisfiedly to pry into all things that may seem to argue God's disfavour, or the unsoundness of our hearts, but also do give entertainment to, and applaud all such objections as are found out, and makes up too hastily false conclusions from them.

(5.) Last of all, as there are these corrupt principles of carnal reason and suspiciousness in us, to raise and foment these doubts and fears from God's dealing towards us; so there is an abundance of guilt within us, of our false dealings towards him. And we have consciences, which remain in part defiled, which may further join with all these, and increase our fears and doubtings; and as we are dark and weak creatures, so guilty creatures also. And this guilt, like the waves of the sea, or the swellings of Jordan, does begin upon these terrible storms from God to rise, and swell, and overflow in our consciences. As in David, Ps. xxxviii., when God's wrath was sore upon him, ver. 1, 2, then also he complains, 'mine iniquities are gone over my head,' ver. 4. There is much guile and falseness of heart, which in those distempers, when our consciences do boil within us, and are stirred and heated to the bottom, doth, like the scum, come up and float aloft. Thus in David, when he was under the rod for his sin of murder, as the guilt of his sin, so the guile of his spirit came up, and he calls for 'truth in the inward parts,' Ps. li. 6. For as his sin, ver. 2, so his falseness of heart was ever before him; and with an eye to this he spake that speech, Ps. xxxii., Oh, 'blessed is that man in whose spirit is no guile, and to whom the Lord imputeth no sin.' Thus he spake when God had charged upon him the guilt of his sin, and discovered to him the guile of his spirit, ver. 4, 5. And this guile doth oftentimes so appear, that our consciences can hardly discern anything else to be in us; it lies uppermost, and covers our graces from our view: and like as the chaff, when the wheat is tossed in the fan, comes up to the top, so in these commotions and winnowings of spirit do our corruptions float in our consciences, whilst the graces that are in us lie covered under them out of sight; and the dark side of our hearts, as of the cloud, is turned towards us, and the light side from us. And indeed there are in the best of us humours enough, which if they be stirred and congregated in our consciences, may alone cast us into these burning fits of trouble and distress; so as whilst God's Spirit shall withhold from us the light of our own graces, and our own consciences represent to us the guile and corruptions that are in our best performances, our hearts may conclude ourselves hypocrites, as Mr Bradford in some of his letters doth of himself, and others of the saints have done. Yea, so as even our own consciences—which are the only principle now left in us which should take part with and encourage faith, and witness to us, as the office of it is, the goodness of our estates—in this may join with the former corruptions against us, and bring in a false evidence, and pronounce a false judgment. Even conscience itself, which is ordained, as the urine of the body, to shew the estate of the whole, and therefore is accordingly called good or evil as the man's state is, this is apt in such distempers to change and turn colour, and look to a man's own view as foul as the state of a very hypocrite.

And the reason of this is also as evident as is the experience of it. Even

because conscience remains in part defiled in a man that is regenerate; and though we are 'sprinkled from an evil conscience' in part, yet not wholly: so as though our persons are fully discharged from the guilt of our sins, through the sprinkling of Christ's blood, before God; yet the sprinkling of that blood upon our consciences, whereby we apprehend this, is imperfect. And the reason is, because this very sprinkling of conscience, whereby it testifies the sprinkling of Christ's blood, and our justification thereby, is but part of the sanctification of conscience, as it is a faculty, whose office and duty is to testify and witness our estates; and therefore, as the sanctification of all other faculties is imperfect, so of conscience also herein. And hence it is that when God's Spirit forbeareth to witness with conscience the goodness of our estates, and ceaseth to embolden and encourage conscience by his presence, and the sprinkling of Christ's blood upon it against the remaining defilement, that then our consciences are as apt to fall into fears, and doubts, and self-condemnings, even as much as, when he withdraws the assistance of his grace, those other faculties are to fall into any other sin. And therefore, as the law of sin in the other members may be up in arms and prevail so far as to lead us captive unto sin; so may the guilt of sin in our consciences remaining in part defiled, by the same reason prevail against us, and get the upper hand, and lead us captive to fears and doubtings, and cast us into bondage.

CHAPTER VI.

The third efficient cause, Satan.—His special malice in this temptation, commission.—Access to, and advantage over us in this temptation, by reason of the darkness in us.

THUS far our own hearts, upon the Holy Ghost's deserting, become authors unto us of this darkness.

3. But herein believers wrestle not alone with flesh and blood, and the darkness thereof; but do further conflict also with those spiritual wickednesses, the princes of darkness, Eph. vi. 12, about their interest in those heavenly privileges, as the phrase there used, *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*, may be well interpreted; even with Satan and his angels, whom the Apostle compares to 'a roaring lion, that seeks whom he may devour,' 1 Peter v. 8. And like as when 'God makes his natural darkness, and it is night, then the young lions creep forth, and roar after their prey,' as the Psalmist says, Ps. civ. 20, 21: so do these roaring lions, when God hath withdrawn the light of his countenance, and night comes on, and those damps and fogs of jealousies and guilt begin to arise out of a man's own heart; then come these forth, and say, as David's enemies said in his distress, 'Come let us now take him, for God hath forsaken him;' let us now devour him, and swallow him up with sorrow and despair. And as God says of those enemies of his church, Zech. i. 15, 'I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction;' so when God is angry with his child, and but a little, and doth hide his face but for a moment, yet Satan watcheth that hour of darkness, as Christ calls it, Luke xxii. 53, and joins his power of darkness to this our natural darkness, to cause, if possible, blackness of darkness, even utter despair, in us.

Now, concerning Satan's working herein, we will, as in the former, more distinctly treat thereof by way of explication of it, (1.) more generally; (2.) more particularly:—

First, in general; (1.) Satan, he hath a special inclination, and a more peculiar malicious desire, to vex and molest the saints with this sort of temptations, of doubts and disquietness that God is not their God; so as all his other temptations unto sin are but as the laying in and barrelling up the gunpowder, and making of the train, for this great plot of blowing up all. He tempteth Peter to deny his Master,—'Satan desires to winnow you,'—but he hath a further reach, a design upon his faith, which Christ foresaw, and therefore did mainly bend his prayer against it; 'but I have prayed that thy faith fail not.' Satan hoped by that gross sin to have drawn him into despair. We may likewise observe how he did place this temptation in the forefront of those three assaults which he made upon Christ; who as in his obedience, so in his temptations, is made a complete example unto us; for he was tempted in all things, that is, with all sorts of temptations, and also like us for the manner, only without sin, Heb. iv. 15. Now he tempted him not only to vain hopes, when he shewed him the glory of the whole world,

and to presumption, to throw himself down headlong from an unwarrantable ground; but first and primarily, to jealousies and distrusts between him and his Father, and between his human nature and the divine. For when Christ had newly received that testimony from all the three Persons,—the Father proclaiming him to be his Son from heaven; the Spirit descending on him at his baptism, it being the special grace and institution of that ordinance to seal up adoption and regeneration,—then comes Satan and tempts him to question that voice, that it might be but a delusion. And Christ's human nature never having done any outward miracle as yet, as appears John ii. 11, he would now have had him take this occasion, in the extremity of his hunger, by commanding stones to become bread, to make trial whether he was the Son of God or no, and hypostatically united to the second Person; which if God should not do for him, then to question his sonship, and think all this to be but a delusion. This was the meaning of it, 'If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread,' &c.; withal insinuating that God, leaving him even destitute of daily bread, which parents that are evil give unto their children, and not a stone instead of bread, might seem to occasion an *if* whether he was the Son of God or no. The reasons of this are—

[1.] Above all graces in us, he is the greatest enemy to faith; therefore, 1 Thess. iii. 5, the apostle was jealous of Satan in nothing more than in this, lest he had been dealing and tampering with, and perverting their *faith*: 'I sent to know of your faith, lest by some means the tempter hath tempted you;' for faith in God is the greatest enemy unto Satan, it 'quencheth all his darts,' Eph. vi. 16. By 'standing stedfast in which' we 'resist him, so that he flies from us,' 1 Pet. v. 9. As therefore faith is that τὸ ἔργον, that work of God and the master-grace, John vi. 29; so despair and doubting is the masterpiece of Satan. And in faith he is envious especially at the joy of our faith, Rom. xv. 13. And as comfort is the most proper work of the Spirit, and most pleasing work to him, so is discomfort and distress the proper work of this evil spirit. And again—

[2.] As he is most opposite to the Holy Spirit, so he delights to blaspheme his work in our hearts to us, by persuading us that all is counterfeit.

[3.] He is called ἐχθρὸς, that envious one, and the main object and mark of his envy is this, that God should be our God, who hath cast off him; and therefore, when he sees he cannot separate between God and us really, he will endeavour to cast and raise up jealousies that he is not our God in our apprehensions. He endeavoured to raise jealousies between God and our first parents,—'God knows ye shall be gods,' &c.,—as if God had forbidden them that fruit out of envy towards them of a better condition. And the like he endeavoured between Christ's human nature and the divine, though hypostatically united. And likewise—

[4.] *That God hath given us eternal life, and that life is in his Son.* This being that great truth of the gospel, so as a Christian that believes it not makes God a liar, 1 John v. 10, 11; therefore Satan, being that great liar, opposeth this great truth and our faith therein above all other. His envy at the advancement of our nature in Christ, according to that truth, is thought by some to have been his fall and ruin, so understanding that in John viii. 44, 'He abode not in the truth.' However, he doth now delight to make God a liar to us in our apprehensions, by questioning his promises, and especially to enforce the persuasion thereof out of God's own dealing with us, 'perverting his righteous ways.'

(2.) And secondly, as Satan hath such a desire, so God may give his child up into Satan's hand for a while thus to afflict and terrify his spirit. His

last commission over Job seemeth to extend thus far, for his life only was excepted, Job ii. 6, 'He is in thy hand, only save his life:' and therefore, after that leave given, we hear Job, although never brought to question his estate, yet crying out of terrors, and of the sins of his youth; for Satan then, as he smote his body with boils, so buffeted his spirit. And though Satan hath will of himself, and a desire to it, and power physical enough, and abilities, to inflict this at all times, yet he must further have power moral, or leave and commission from God. And God sometimes gives to Satan power over the sons and daughters of Abraham, Luke xiii. 16, even as well as others; and as their bodies to be vexed by him, so their spirits; and as to provoke them unto sin, so much more to terrify for sin, there being more of punishment than of sin in that. Thus he left David to Satan, to provoke him unto sin, as well as Judas. Therefore that provocation to number the people, as it is imputed to Satan and his malice, 1 Chron. xxi. 1; so also to God and his anger, in giving leave first to Satan, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. And as an 'evil spirit from the Lord' troubled Saul's mind, 1 Sam. xvi. 14; so a 'messenger of Satan was sent to buffet' Paul's spirit, 2 Cor. xii. 7. Wherein yet God doth no way help Satan with any further power than what as an angel he furnished him with at his creation; nor with any assistance or information of our secret sins against us, to enable him the more to assault us,—this I find not in Scripture,—but permissive power only. Which is either—

[1.] Obtained and given at Satan's motion and request first made; so that phrase, Luke xxii. 31, 'Satan hath requested and petitioned to winnow you,' as that also, Job ii. 3, 'Thou movedst me against him,' doth imply; and as it may seem by singling out and calling forth some one for this combat; as he did him more especially, to whom therefore Christ addresseth that premonition, and the word ἐξῃτήσατο implies as much. So also Job was singled out for this duel both by God and Satan. Or else—

[2.] This is done through the ordinance of excommunication and censures of the church duly administered, *clave non errante*, for gross and scandalous sins. The proper inward effect that accompanies that ordinance which casts men out of the church, being inward affliction and distress of conscience by Satan,—which of all afflictions is the greatest punishment, ἀπιτιμία, as the Apostle calls it, 2 Cor. ii. 6,—thereby to bring a man to repentance. Even as, on the contrary, the special work of baptism, to such as were *fideles adulti* and believers already, was by joy in the Holy Ghost to seal up their adoption and regeneration unto him; as to the eunuch, Acts viii. 39. This we may see in the excommunication of the incestuous Corinthian; whose excommunication is therefore expressed to be 'a delivering him up unto Satan, in the name of the Lord Jesus,' 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; that is, he was to be cast out by a commission from Christ, which going forth in his name, when they published it on earth, he signed it in heaven. Upon which, rightly administered, doth ensue, first, that as the church doth cut them off from communion with them, so God cuts them off from communion with himself, and hides and withdraws the light of his countenance, the witness of his Spirit, and his comfortable presence. And not only so, but 'delivereth them up to Satan,' that being the consequent of it; which therefore, because it implies the former, is put to express the whole proceeding. Which delivery of him unto Satan was not a giving him a commission to carry him on to more sin,—though that often be indeed the effect of it in hypocrites, as in Alexander, 1 Tim. i. 19,—for the end propounded by the Apostle was to 'destroy the flesh,' that is, corruption and the body of sin; and that 'the spirit might be

saved,' ver. 5, that is, that contrary principle of grace which yet remained, but was ready to die, as it is Rev. iii. 2, might be saved and kept from death and destruction: but it was to terrify and afflict his conscience, and to stir up in him the guilt of his sin, with terrors for it, which God sanctifieth to humble and to mortify the flesh. And thus, when that Corinthian was excommunicated, did Satan accordingly deal with him; for in the next epistle, 2 Cor. ii. 7, we find him well-nigh 'swallowed up of sorrow,' which was Satan's doing; for, ver. 11, 'We are not ignorant,' saith the Apostle, in reference partly to this, 'of his devices.' And thus Satan continued still to handle him, even now when he began to be truly humbled, and was a fit subject to receive forgiveness and comfort, ver. 7; when, though he feared God and obeyed him, yet he walked in darkness till the church received him. Or else—

[3.] When this ordinance is not in the case of such sins administered, then God himself, who works without an ordinance sometimes the same effects that with it, doth excommunicate men's spirits from his presence, and gives them up to Satan, by terrors to whip them home to himself. So that God gives him leave to exercise power over both godly men and wicked men, only with this difference: wicked men God gives up unto him as unto their ruler and their head; they are therefore called the 'rulers of the darkness of this world,' Eph. vi. 12, who therefore 'work effectually in the children of disobedience,' Eph. ii. 2; or else as captives to a prince, he taking them 'captive at his will,' 2 Tim. ii. 26, so as they are captived and 'led away,' 1 Cor. xii. 2. But his own, God gives up to him but as prisoners to a jailor, as a magistrate may do his child, to commit him; who hath not a power over his prisoner to do anything with him, but only by appointment for a time, with a limited commission, and therefore cannot put him on the rack or into the dungeon, but when and how far God pleaseth: even as when Satan is said to have 'cast them into prison,' Rev. ii. 10, his commission was but for ten days, and then God rebukes him.

(3.) Satan having thus obtained leave, now to shew how able and powerful he is to work darkness in us, I need not much insist on. His physical and natural power to work upon our spirits, by his creation as he is an angel, is exceeding great. We are a middle sort of creatures between them and beasts; beasts being merely corporeal, they merely spiritual, man between both. 'He made us a little inferior to the angels,' Heb. ii.; though but a little, yet inferior; and in respect of that inferiority, we are exposed to their working and crafty wiles. The great advantage they have hereby over us, the Apostle insinuates when he says, 'We have not to do with flesh and blood, but spiritual wickednesses,' Eph. vi. 12; that is, with spirits, in abilities transcending the power of the flesh and blood; for flesh is used to express weakness when it is thus compared, as here, with spirit: so Isa. xxxi. 3. Therefore they are there also called, as *principalities* for their authority, so *powers* for their natural abilities; and that to work upon us, for it is spoken in that relation. All which power, how great soever in him at his first creation, is now become the power of darkness; and so called because most powerful that way; namely, to cause and work darkness in us. And though he can for a need 'transform himself into an angel of light,' by deluding his deceived enthusiasts with false joys, yet therein he doth but act a part, it is but forced. But to shew himself an angel of darkness, by terrifying and affrighting weak consciences, this is natural now to him; his power lies most in this. Therefore his title further is the 'ruler of darkness;' and also he is called 'that strong man,'—strong, as to keep peace, Luke xi. 21, in those he deceives with

a false peace, so to make war and commotions in us when he is cast out. We are bidden, therefore, to stand upon our guard, and to look that 'we have on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against his wiles,' Eph. vi. 11.

(4.) Only, in the fourth place, though Satan hath never so much power, yet the advantage and exercise of this his power to work those disquietments in us is by reason of that sinful darkness which is in us. We may say, that as unless he had power from above,—that is, from God,—so nor unless he had furtherance from beneath, even from those principles of guilt and darkness in us before-mentioned, he could not disquiet us. 'Satan cometh,' saith Christ, 'but hath nothing in me.' A commission he had, and therefore came; but he had nothing of his image, or of the guilt of any of his works, to work upon in Christ; and therefore could effect nothing at all upon his spirit. That, therefore, which gives him privilege, scope, and matter to work thus upon us is something within us; there being, even in the best, something which doth belong to his jurisdiction, which maketh their spirits fit subjects for his temptations to take upon. In Eph. vi. 12, they are called the 'rulers of the darkness of this world;' and, Col. i. 12, 13, their power is called 'the power of darkness;' so as darkness is his territories, dominion, and jurisdiction: for it is his work and his image, without which he could have no power at all with us.

(5.) But by reason of this remaining darkness he hath a double advantage over us:—

[1.] An advantage of more near, intimate, and immediate access to our spirits, to close with them, to suggest unto them, and to work upon them; and to tempt not only, as one man tempts another, by the outward senses, but by the inward also, which is an exceeding great advantage. And though it is true that, as he is an angel, he hath naturally by creation ability thus to do; yet as he is now a devil and an unclean spirit, were we but perfectly holy, as in innocency, he should be debarred all such near communication to us. To this purpose it may be observed, that in that his temptation of Adam in innocency, he was not permitted, in his first assault, till he had sinned, to come within him to work upon his fancy and affections indiscernibly; but only mediately and externally, by an audible voice in the body of a serpent. And likewise, as touching the second Adam, we read not that he had access to his inward senses and spirit; but only by an external suggestion by voice, and by visible representations; as when he shewed him the glory of the world in visible landscapes of his own making, which were represented to the eye. What else was the reason why he took the advantage of a mountain? If it had been by working on his inward senses, any place would have served for that. But the devil then appeared in a visible shape, and so tempted him, for he would have had him fall down to worship him. *Cæterum malus ille extrinsecus, ac non per cogitationes, Christum adortus est, quemadmodum et Adamum. Nam ne illum quidem per immissas cogitationes, sed per serpentem impetivit.** Another time we find him crept into one of his apostles, to assault our Saviour by him, Matt. xvi. 23, 'Master, spare thyself,' says he; when therefore Christ says to him, 'Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence to me.' So as still Satan was kept at a distance, and could come no nearer. And that he should yet come thus near to him, made Christ also, in that great temptation in the wilderness, with so much vehemency and indignation at last say to him, 'Avoid, Satan,' Matt. iv. 10, as loathing the nearness of so foul a spirit. For what fellowship,—that is, such thus near,—should light

* Damasc. Ortho. Fidei, lib. iii., cap. 20.

have with this angel of darkness? Nor should he have such more near and inward access to our spirits, but for that darkness in us, by reason of which he thus comes within us; and as darkness mingleth with darkness, so he with our spirits. So that as the light of grace in us begun doth fit us for God's drawing nigh to us, so this darkness, remaining in part unexpelled, exposeth us to Satan's drawing nigh so near as to mingle with our spirits, and, as it were, to become one spirit with us.

[2.] As hereby he hath this advantage of access to get within us, so this darkness in us is also as fit fuel and as tinder to his fiery temptations, that presently enkindleth and inflameth. So as all those effects of the principles of darkness mentioned he can both increase and augment, and so add blackness to that darkness in us. And darkness being his dominion, therefore so much darkness as is in us, so great a party he hath in us to work upon. Hence, therefore, all the effects that he worketh in unregenerate men, who are nothing but darkness, he may work in regenerate men, according to the proportion of the remainder of darkness in them, to a certain degree, and for a limited season; as to delude their reason, falsely accuse and terrify their consciences, &c. Only final despair and revenge against God, which is that sin unto death, this the Apostle excepteth; for having occasionally mentioned that sin, 1 John v. 16, he adds, ver. 18, that 'he that is born of God sinneth not,' that is, not that sin; and he subjoineth, 'but keeps himself that that evil one touch him not,' that is, not with the least infusion of the venom of that sin which is properly *his sin*, John viii. 44, and which he toucheth their spirits with who become the serpent's seed. And therefore all such instances as we find, that shew how he hath wrought on the spirits of carnal men by reason of their total darkness, may be alleged to shew in a proportion what he may also work on regenerate men for a season by reason of their darkness in part remaining: all things happening alike to all.—Thus in general

CHAPTER VII.

More particularly, how Satan works upon those three principles in us: first, on carnal reason.

SEEING therefore the exercise of his power lies in that darkness which is in us, let us more particularly see how able and powerful he is to work upon those several principles of *carnal reason, guilt of conscience, jealousies* and *fears.*

First, on *carnal reason;* on which he chiefly worketh in this sort of temptations, the strength whereof lies in false reasonings, wherein, if in anything, he hath the advantage.

1. First, his abilities to forge and invent false reasonings and arguments to overthrow our faith, are, as they must needs be conceived to be, exceeding great: who for this knowledge is called δαίμων; as well as Satan for his malice; and for his subtlety in outreaching us, a serpent: who when young, outwitted our first parents; 'he beguiled Eve through his subtlety,' says the Apostle, 2 Cor. xi. 3, then when their reason was not depraved; but now he is grown 'that old serpent,' Rev. xii. 9: and we are become 'children, apt to be tossed to and fro,' Eph. iv. 14. He hath had time enough to improve his knowledge in; a student he is of five thousand years' standing, that hath lost no time, but as he is said to 'accuse day and night,' Rev. xii. 10, so is able to study both day and night; and he hath made it his chief, if not whole study, to enable himself to tempt, and plead against us. It is his trade. Therefore as men are called lawyers or divines from their callings, so he the tempter and the accuser from his employment. And by this his long experience and observation he hath his νοήματα, 2 Cor. ii. 11, his set and composed machinations; his μεθοδείας, Eph. vi. 11, his methods of temptations, which are studied and artificially moulded and ordered; even such systems and methods of them as tutors and professors of arts and sciences have, and do read over again and again to their auditors. The Apostle calls them 'darts,' ver. 16,—and he hath a whole shop and armoury of them ready made and forged,—which, for the acuteness and subtle sophistry that is in them, are called 'depths of Satan,' Rev. ii. 24; which depths, if in any point, are most to be found in this: for he is more especially versed in this great question and dispute, Whether a man be the child of God or no? more than in any other. All other controversies he hath had to deal in but in particular ages, as occasionally they were started; but this hath been the standing controversy of all ages, since God hath had any children on earth: with every one of whom, more or less, he hath at one time or another had solemn disputes about it; so as he knows all the advantages, windings, and turnings in this debate, all the objections and answers, and discussions in it.

And as other controversies, the longer they are on foot, and the further they have been carried along, the more they are enlarged, improved, and grow more subtle; so must this needs also, especially in this latter knowing

age of the world, and by reason also of that seeming near similitude which hypocrisy holds unto the truth and power of grace, which hath fazzled * and entangled this controversy. The objections and difficulties which a believer meets with in beating out a right judgment of his estate, are greater than in any controversy the world ever knew, and afford stranger knots, and require as acute distinctions to dissolve them as the school knows any; and indeed such as, did not the Holy Ghost sometimes cut, sometimes untie them for believers, by witnessing with our spirits that we are the sons of God, bare reason alone could never determine in it. Now Satan, through long experience and observation, hath all these at his fingers' ends, and hath reduced them all to commonplaces long since. He hath still observed and laid up what answers have relieved the spirits of believers in such and such a doubt cast in by him, and then studies a further reply against the next time, or for the next believer he shall have to do with.

2. Secondly, as he hath thus thoroughly studied this controversy, and knows all the windings and false reasonings in it; so withal, by his daily studying and considering men, he knows how best to suit and make use of those reasonings, both to persons and seasons. It is the sole business of those evil spirits to study men; for this end they 'go up and down the earth.' And he hath commonplaces of men, and their several frames and temper of spirit, as well as of temptations; he knows all the several ranks and classes of men in the state of grace; and according to their ranks, with what sort of temptations to encounter them. For men's temptations are 'various and manifold,' 1 Pet. i. 6; even as the gifts and operations of the Spirit are, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5. Now, he having beaten out this controversy with all sorts, knows how to lay the dispute, how to order, and marshal, and apply objections, and wield his blows with most success and advantage. That as physicians, having observed the several workings of medicines of all sorts, upon several ages and constitutions, and what several issues and effects they have had, do therefore accordingly prescribe and apply several medicines according to the several and differing conditions of their patients, though sick of the same disease. Thus Satan, he by observation finding the hearts of some men 'answering' to some others, 'as face to face in water,' as Solomon says; and withal remembering what reasonings have always taken most with such a sort or strain of Christians, whose corruptions and whose graces were much alike unto those in this or that man he hath now to deal with; accordingly he makes use and application of these reasonings again. The tempers of men's spirits we know are diverse, and so are capable of diversity of suggestions. And again, the operations of grace, as of sin, are various in those several tempers. And God's dealings with and workings upon his children are as various as either. Some he humbleth much, some are led on with comfort; some he works on with a sudden and marvellous light, as if the sun should rise on the sudden at midnight, and on others insensibly and by degrees, as when the dawning steals upon the day; some have had a false and counterfeit work before, some were never enlightened until savingly; and this variety affords rise and occasion for several temptations. So as what kind of work any other Christian hath had is apt to be made an exception to another that wants it. I was never thus humbled, says one; nor I thus comforted, says another; I had a sudden violent work indeed, which came in like a spring-tide, but now the tide is fallen, and my first love abated, says a third; I had some workings and enlightenings heretofore, says another, and I was deceived then, and I may be so now also: and so he hath

* Embarrassed.—ED.

that vast task set him, to compare a counterfeit work with a true. Thus every several way of working lies open to several exceptions; and as we say that every calling earthly hath its several and proper temptations, so the several ways and manners of effecting this calling heavenly have their several veins and currents of temptations. All which Satan knows, and hath often traced; and accordingly knows how to fit them to men, and to prosecute them the most advantageous way.

So in like manner he takes the compass of every man's knowledge, notions, and apprehensions; according unto which, as our knowledge is more or less, we are also capable of several temptations. Many reasonings and objections, which, like small hail-shot, could not reach or make any dint at all upon men of parts and knowledge, both because they by reason of their knowledge do soar high out of the gun-shot of them, and have also on the 'whole armour of God,' as the apostle speaks, Eph. vi.—that is, are in complete armour, abounding in all faith and knowledge,—yet such reasonings may be fittest to level with at such as are more ignorant, and fly low, and have but some few broken pieces of that armour to defend some parts with. But on the contrary, those other of his great-shot, which he dischargeth on men of knowledge, they would clean fly over the others' heads, and not come near such smaller vessels. All in Thyatira knew not Satan's depths, nor were capable of them, Rev. ii. 24. Thus the ignorance and the want of knowledge of the meaning of the Scriptures, and of the ways of grace chalked forth therein, how doth Satan abuse, to the disquietment of many poor and good souls that want much knowledge, by putting false glosses upon them! How many weak souls do stick in shallows, and are sometimes a long while terrified with gross mistakes, and like small birds are held long under with limed straws of frivolous objections, which great ones fly away with! That great apostle, being a man of knowledge, was not easily taken with such chaff. 'We are not ignorant of his devices,' says he, 2 Cor. ii. 11; and therefore Satan takes another course with him, and comes with downright blows, and falls a-buffeting him, 2 Cor. xii. 7. Thus doth Satan take measure of the bore, as I may so speak, of every man's understanding, and fits them with objections proportionable, in several sizes. And as the Apostle in his sermons prepared milk for babes, but strong meat for strong men, so doth Satan in his temptations apply and suit them to men's notions and apprehensions, still framing objections according to their reading.

3. Thirdly, he is able undiscernibly to communicate all his false reasonings, though never so spiritual, which he doth forge and invent, and that in such a manner as to deceive us by them, and to make them take with us.

(1.) First, he is able not only to put into the heart suggestions and solicitations unto sensual and worldly objects; such as that into Judas's heart, to betray his Master for money, John xiii. 2, and to tempt married couples severed to incontinency, 1 Cor. vii. 5; but also the most subtle and abstracted reasonings concerning things spiritual, which are utterly remote from sense, he can insinuate and impart according to the measure and capacity of men's apprehensions. Therefore we are said to wrestle with them about things heavenly, and our interest therein is often made the matter of contention and the subject of the question. So that phrase, Eph. vi. 12, ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις, when it is said, 'We wrestle with spiritual wickednesses in heavenly,' is rather to be understood of heavenly things than of heavenly places; the word signifying rather supercelestial, in the highest heavens, whither, if rendered of places, the devils never came since their fall. And it being used elsewhere for heavenly things, as Heb. viii. 5, and the preposition ἐν, or ἐκ,

being likewise sometimes put to express the object-matter about which a thing is conversant, as Matt. xi. 6, 'Blessed is he that is not offended in me,'—that is, with or about me, and for my sake,—it may congruously be so here meant, as noting to us, that the price, the stake, about which we wrestle with Satan are not things worldly, as honours, riches, and the like, but things heavenly, which concern our souls and estates hereafter.

Now the contention being about heavenly things and spiritual blessings, it cannot be transacted but by reasonings suitable; that is, spiritual false reasonings, abstracted from sense and fancy. And in this respect they are termed spiritual wickednesses, because in such wickednesses they deal and trade in especially, or as much as in those that are sensual; as tempting to unbelief, despair, blasphemy against God, of which sort are all those temptations we have now in hand. And that he is able to convey and suggest such spiritual thoughts and reasonings of what sort soever, appeareth many ways: as by injecting blasphemous thoughts against God, such as do sometimes transcend the wit and capacity of the receiver of them; and is manifest likewise by Saul's prophesying even from the immediate dictating and suggestion of an evil spirit, as is expressly said, 1 Sam. xviii. 10; in the like manner to which haply the Sibyls also prophesied.

But more evident it is in all those damnable heresies which have been broached in all ages, as in the primitive times among the Romans, the broachers whereof are made the emissaries of Satan; therefore, Rom. xvi. 18, he having branded them, unto the Romans, that taught false doctrines among them, and having instructed them against them, he gives this encouragement about them, ver. 20, 'that God should tread down Satan under their feet shortly,' having respect to Satan's work in those errors mentioned, ver. 18, Satan being the main author of them. Thus in the church of Thyatira, those cursed heretics who applauded themselves, and were admired by their followers for the depths and profoundness of their learning, shewn in those heresies they broached: 'depths, as they speak,' Rev. ii. 24. But if they call them depths, says the Apostle, I will call them depths of Satan,—'depths of Satan, as they speak,'—for the devil was the master and the author and suggester of them. So, in after-times, apostasy is ascribed to spirits of error,—that is, devils, which he foretelleth men should give heed unto, 1 Tim. iv. 1,—and to the working of Satan, 2 Thess. ii. 9. It was he that sharpened their wits and pens. Now then, by the same reason, there is no reasoning about our estates, though never so spiritual, but he can suggest it, as well as he did those depths of the heresies to the broachers of them. So as Satan can not only make those false reasonings, which our own hearts forge, more specious and probable, and suggest further confirmations of them, which are enough to add unto this darkness; but he is also able to put in new, which himself invents, of what kind soever they be.

(2.) Secondly, he is not simply able to suggest them, but to insinuate them in such a manner as to take with us and deceive us; yea, and often to set them on with a deep impression. Therefore, in those places forementioned, it is not simply said that there should be spirits which shall suggest errors, but so suggest them as that 'men should give heed unto them.' Thus, 1 Tim. iv. 1, and 2 Thess. ii., where the working of those very same spirits is set forth, ver. 9, it is not only said that they were sent as from God to delude, but with 'strong delusions;' such as should have a strength put into them to prevail, so as that men should believe them. So also, that lying spirit which God sent, and who persuaded Ahab by a lie in the mouths of his false prophets, commission was not simply given to him to suggest a lie,

but so as it should prevail with Ahab; so 2 Chron. xviii. 21, 'And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail.' And as he is thus able, when God gives leave, to delude wicked men's understandings with false reasonings in matters of heresy and false doctrine, by reason of that total darkness that is in them: so he is able, if God give leave, as sometimes he doth, to bring strong delusions upon the minds of God's children also, through false reasonings about their own estates, by reason of that darkness which in part remains in them; by means of which he may work the same effects for a time, and in a certain degree, in a godly man, which in another, as was before observed. Thus the believing Galatians, especially some of them, were so far 'bewitched,' as his word is, as for a time to assent to that great error in point of justification; and this by reason of that folly and darkness which remained in them, as he intimates, when he says, 'O ye *foolish* Galatians, who hath *bewitched* you, that you should not obey the truth?' Gal. iii. 1. And if in the very doctrine of justification itself believers were thus for a time deluded, which is rare, then much more may they, and ordinarily are they, misled in the application of faith, in the believing their own personal justification, which is the point in hand.

Only this is to be added here for caution's sake: that it is true that Satan cannot enforce an act of assent to any falsehood upon the understanding of any man. For how then should they 'all have been damned for believing that lie?' 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12; which should not have been unless it were their own sin; which is as true of all other temptations as that. Though Satan put the thought into Judas's heart, John xiii. 2, yet his own conscience owns it wholly as his own act, Matt. xxvii. 4, 'I have sinned,' &c.

Neither yet doth he so immediately concur to produce such an act of assent in us, as God doth when he worketh faith in us; for then God's power and assistance in working good should be no more than Satan's in working evil. *Tentationis potest esse causa efficax, at non peccati; potest necessitare homines ad sentiendum tentationem, non ad consentiendum.*

And yet the Scripture phrases go far in ascribing unto Satan herein, when it says of those that believed not the gospel, that 'the god of this world hath blinded their minds that believe not,' 2 Cor. iv. 4; which notes out a superadded working of blindness unto their own natural blindness. As also when he says that 'the prince of the air is ἐνεργῶν, that works effectually,' &c., Eph. ii. 2. And also that of the Corinthians whilst unregenerate, who as then are said to be 'carried and led away after dumb idols,' 1 Cor. xii. 2. All which phrases would seem to argue, not only a further power of working upon men's judgments than when one man doth endeavour to corrupt and persuade another man in a moral way, (because he suggesteth indiscernibly, and with more frequency and importunity, and holdeth the mind more to the object, and presenteth an army of confirmations at once, and is able so to marshal them as the mind can scarce resist; and puts all these upon the spirit with a violent and imperious affirmation,) but further, also, they would seem to imply some kind of physical working, though not immediately on the spring of the clock, yet upon the wheels and weights of it—I mean the passions in the body and the images in the fancy, though not upon the understanding immediately; all which, what influence they have to sway the judgment and pervert it, experience shews.

4. Fourthly, he is further able to follow and continue his reasonings as occasion is, and to keep up the dispute, and hold out arguments with us, and out-reason us, by putting in new replies to our answers, and so to maintain and manage and carry along the dispute, and to come up with fresh

supplies: which in this respect is called wrestling, Eph. vi. 12, 'We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but principalities and powers;' it being, as the bodily wrestling, transacted by reiterated assaults, and attempts to overcome and get the victory; he, as it were, going about to strike up our heels, as wrestlers do—that is, to take away from under us those reasonings which supported us, by cavilling objections; which kind of spiritual wrestlings how often have we experience of in spiritual agonies! In the hour of temptation believers find conflicts and bandyings of disputes, rationally carried along, and pertinent objections brought in against those answers which they secretly meditate of. In which cause, therefore, divines bid men not to dispute with that cunning sophister. Thus many, when death hath approached, have found that they have had their reasonings for their estates, and those evidences they have had recourse unto, taken away and confuted as fast as they have thought of them.

And that Satan hath this dexterity and skill thus to manage such kind of disputes with us, is further evident in the framing of heresies, wherein he assists the contrivers of them with pertinent considerations to back and confirm their notions, in their private meditations, studies, and contrivements. And indeed, if Satan were not able and skilful thus to oppose and reply, these kind of temptations which consist in disputes could not be managed; for otherwise in them Satan disputed with us but as if one of us should reason with a dumb man that can hear, but his answers cannot be known, and so he knows no way what reply to make. Therefore surely Satan hath often some way, more or less, a guess and inkling what may be the answers of the heart again: which, were it otherwise, the glory also which God hath by the victory gotten over Satan in these temptations were much obscured, and Satan's confusion less; for the victory of our faith in these disputes, and the resistance it makes, lies chiefly in those replies which are made, whereby it quencheth all his darts: whereof the devil, when he is once sensible and perceives it, he is confounded; for then, when he is once sensible and apprehensive that he is resisted, doth he fly from us, as the Apostle speaks, James iv. 7, and that of his own accord, as the expression there imports; even as a foiled and disgraced soldier. And this we may see in his carriage in those his temptations of Christ, which were managed by mutual disputes, and wherein the foiling of Satan was by the answers out of Scripture which Christ gave; by which being confounded, 'he left him,' as the text says, Matt. iv. 11, as out of pride, ashamed that he was foiled. So that Satan, some way or other, is able to guess at, and discerns the replies in our hearts to his objections, as well as to make and cast in objections.

CHAPTER VIII.

That Satan is able to work upon that other corrupt principle in us: guilt of conscience.—Both how many ways Satan is able to know matter by us to object against us; as also, to set it on, and work upon the guilt and erroneousness of the conscience.

THUS we see how able Satan is to join with and assist carnal reason in us against ourselves. We will now further consider what power and working he may exercise upon that other principle in us, our *consciences;* in joining with the filth and defilement thereof, in accusing us and laying particulars to our charge; in which consisteth the greatest of his strength, even in an army of accusations of us to ourselves, which in this warfare he musters up against us. This sort of temptations we have in hand consists either of false *majors* or false *minors*, which are like the two wings of an army. His false *majors*, they are such as, misapprehensions of the ways and of the work of grace, or misunderstanding of sayings of Scripture, &c., which by reason of that darkness of ignorance that is in us, he puts upon us wrested and perverted. As, that to relapse into the same sin again and again is not compatible with grace; and many the like. For the opinions whereby some do measure what strictness is essential to the being in the state of grace are often too severe and rigid; as in others, too loose. The measure of some is too scant, not giving allowance to failings; as of others, too large, taking in such gross corruptions, and the constant practice of them, as cannot stand with grace. And Satan deceives with both: as the one sort, of profane men, to flatter themselves to be in a good condition when they are not, so the other, of weak and tender consciences, that they are not in a good estate when they are. And in like manner places of Scripture misunderstood do oft prove matter of great temptation to many; as that Heb. vi., unto one who, having fallen from his first love, concluded he could never be saved, because it is there said, that 'they which are once enlightened, if they fall away, it is impossible they should be renewed to repentance;' whereas it is only to be understood of a revengeful total apostasy. Thus, as Elymas 'perverted the right ways of the Lord,' Acts xiii. 10, so doth Satan also; Elymas being therefore there called 'child of the devil,' because he did the work of his father therein.

Now, all such false reasonings as are founded upon such mistakes of the things, and of the rule itself whereby we should judge of our estates—false *majors*—do properly belong to the former head of carnal reason. But he hath another wing of forces to join to these; and they are false accusations of a man to himself. from the guilt of his own heart and ways, misconceits of a man's self, and misapplications to a man's self: another sort of arguments, wherein the *minors* are false. So, although a man be full of knowledge, and through the light thereof hath a right judgment both of the Scriptures and of the ways of the work of grace by which men's estates are to be judged,

and so therein Satan cannot be too hard for him with all his sophistry; yet by misrepresenting a man to himself, and by perverting his own ways to him, making that which is straight seem crooked, and all in him to be hypocrisy, a man is brought to pass a false sentence upon himself. So as if this subtle pleader cannot deceive the judge, as I may so speak, with false rules and mistakes in the law itself, then he endeavours it by misrepresenting the case of the party, and puts in a false bill of accusation, so ordered and coloured as to procure a judgment against him; laying before the eyes of men's consciences their by-ends, deadness, and hardness of heart, and falseness in such and such turnings of their lives; excepting against what is good in them, aggravating what is evil, and all to enforce from thence a false conclusion. To instance in some one false reasoning of this latter sort, Satan oft argueth and chargeth the conscience of one distressed in this or the like manner:—

'Those in whom any sin reigneth, or in whose hearts hypocrisy and self-love is the predominant principle, are not in the state of grace.'

'But such a one art thou,' &c. For the proof of which *minor* he musters up and sets in order, in the view of conscience, a multitude of instances of sins committed, thus heinously, thus oft; of duties omitted, and if performed, yet with such and such pride of heart, self-aims, &c. In which sort of reasoning the *major* and first proposition is true; but the *minor*, the assumption, *such a one art thou*, that is most false. And although there be a truth in the instances alleged to prove it, that such sins have been committed, and that in performance of duties such particular by-ends, &c., do arise and are found in the heart; yet not in that manner as he would lay the charge, not as reigning, not as the swaying and prevailing principle in a man's whole course. That hypocrisy is there cannot be denied; but that hypocrisy rules there and is predominant, and that nothing but hypocrisy, is false, which yet Satan amazeth the conscience with, to bring forth this conclusion out of all, 'Therefore thou art a hypocrite.' Which conclusion likewise, how able he is to set on with terrors and affrightments, we shall shew anon. That which we have now in hand is to shew how able he is for those kind of false reasonings, the deceit of which lies chiefly in the assumption and *minor* proposition; that is, in misapplications to a man's self. In which he hath principally to deal with conscience; for the guilt of a man's particular ways, actions, and corruptions, the seat whereof is the conscience, is made the matter of the evidence and the proofs of those *minors;* and the defilement and erroneousness of the conscience is that principle in us which he works upon when he enforceth such a misapprehension from those evidences.

Wherein, by the way, we may take notice of a difference between the Holy Ghost's dealing with a believer, when at any time he comes with the word, and searcheth and tries his heart, and discovers corruptions to us,—to wit, such a searching as David prayed for, 'Examine me, O Lord, and try my heart,' &c., Ps. xxvi. 2, cxxxix. 23,—convincing and reproving us, and that sometimes with some sharpness, for our by-ends, hypocrisies, &c.; when also he 'bores the ear, and shews wherein we have exceeded,' as Elihu speaks, Job xxxvi. 9, 10;—and between these other siftings and winnowings of Satan, as Christ's phrase is, Luke xxii. 31. The difference is, that the Holy Ghost dealeth sweetly herein, but as a father that rebukes and convinceth his child of his misdemeanours; but without putting in any such sting in the conclusion, that therefore we are hypocrites; nor to any such meaning or purpose thence inferred, that therefore sin reigns in us, &c.: but in these of Satan, that is the issue he mainly drives all to, and it is made the foot, the burden

of all those his accusations, and is as the scope and argument that runs through the whole of that his charge against us.

And in respect to this his misrepresenting our estates, and false aggravations of our sins unto us, he is called, as the *tempter*, which is in a general relation to all sorts of temptations, so the *accuser*, κατήγορος, Rev. xii. 10, or impleader against us; and as the accuser of us to God, in God's court, and before his tribunal, (for to accuse in a court the word may seem to import,) so in the court of our own consciences. And as he tempts us unto sin, so also for sin and by sin,—that is, the guilt of it,—to draw us to despair. He that accused Job unto God, would sure accuse Job unto himself much more.

And though it may be truly affirmed that neither Satan nor our own consciences can ever aggravate unto us too much the intrinsical sinfulness, the heinousness and vileness of our sins in their due and proper colours, and true aggravations of them, which we can never come to see enough, as not to hate nor loathe and mourn for as we ought; yet Satan and our own consciences may, in the representation of our sins, put such false apprehensions and such aggravations upon them as may make us apprehend too much about them; as when it is suggested that they are such as are not compatible with the state of grace, or that they are utterly unpardonable. He may likewise use them as inductions to prove a false conclusion. And also, although our sins, if truly, can never be enough represented, if it be in order to drive a man more to God's grace and unto Christ: yet to present them singly and alone, and to hold the mind and intention of it so to them as to cause us to forget our own mercies, and in such a manner as thereby God's mercies and all comforts are hidden and concealed from us; this is that is Satan's practice, and is the cause of this deep bondage we thus here speak of. And in this respect that name, κατήγορος, the accuser, is given this evil spirit in a direct and full opposition to that special name and office of the Holy Ghost, παράκλητος, the comforter or pleader for us: because as the Holy Ghost maketh intercession in our own hearts unto God for us, and upon true repentance helpeth us to make 'apologies' for ourselves, as the word is, 2 Cor. vii. 11, and comforteth us by discovering 'our graces given us of God,' as 1 Cor. ii. 12, and by pleading our evidences, and witnessing with our spirits that we are the sons of God; so on the contrary, Satan is κατήγορος, an accuser, by laying to our charge the guilt of our sins, by impleading our evidences, misrepresenting our estates, thereby to deject us and 'swallow us up with sorrow,' as 2 Cor. ii. 7.

And further; because in these accusations his scope is to misrepresent our estates to us, and falsely to disquiet us, therefore he is yet more especially called διάβολος, a slanderer, as one that falsely and lyingly calumniateth and slandereth all our graces, all God's dealings towards us, all our dealings towards him; slandering our persons, our estates to us, charging us to be hypocrites, unsound, and carnal, and counterfeit Christians, still misconstruing all unto the worst. Which false calumnies and charges of his, I take most properly to be those 'darts' mentioned Eph. vi. 11, which are there said more especially to oppose our faith; and therefore faith is there said to quench them. From which trade of his forging darts of calumnies, he hath his name διάβολος, a slanderer, from διαβάλλω; a metaphor it is, from casting darts, (for the slanderous calumnies of the tongue are 'as a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow,' as Solomon speaks, Prov. xxv. 18; their teeth spears and arrows, Ps. lvii. 4;) and such are these kind of Satan's temptations and accusations against us, even as darts and arrows that wound and pierce,

and run through the passions and affections, that strike the soul through and through with fears. His name, πειράζων, the tempter, is from πείρω, to pierce; because such are his darts, so sharpened, and flung with that force, as they are fitted to pierce, and enabled to run through. And besides the sharpness of the darts themselves, they are said to be fiery, as making double way for themselves; for a piece of iron, though blunt, yet if fired red-hot, it runs through without resistance.

Satan, he is that great general of the whole powers of darkness in us; and therefore even the forces of the guilt of sin, the proper seat of which is the conscience, he hath some command over, as well as of the power of sin in other members: and therefore as he can muster up and set on fleshly lusts which fight against the soul, and provoke and back them in their assaults upon us, so he can clap on the chains of guilt and bondage upon our consciences.

And as he can stir up that guilt that is in us, so also work upon that injudiciousness and erroneous defilement that is in the conscience, to judge of a man's own estate; this Satan works upon and abuseth. For as he hath a power to work upon the corruption in the rest of the faculties, so also over the defilement and pollution of the conscience; misleading it in its verdict of our estates, as cunning pleaders do a silly jury. The wards of conscience are of themselves loose, and naturally misplaced, but he with his false keys wrings and perverts them much more; it naturally gives an uncertain sound, but he by his false alarms and panic fears cast in doth much more confound the testimony of it. And how easy is it to trouble a soul disquieted already, and to work upon jealousies which are raised! We see how far a cunning man can insinuate with jealous natures, to increase suspicions and surmises. When a humour is stirred, how easily is it wrought on! And thus often when the Spirit hath already read us a sharp lecture, and examined our consciences, then Satan he strikes in, and descants upon it all to deeper terrors and distress.

But the more full and distinct explication of Satan's work of accusation of us herein requires a further search and inquiry, and a larger demonstration: how Satan should come, and how far, to know matter by us thus to accuse us of. For if he doth accuse, he must, as is said Acts xxviii., 'have aught against us whereof to accuse;' else it were in vain. And there is this difference between these kinds of temptations wherein we are exercised about the guilt of sin, and those other unto sin: that the object-matter of other temptations is what is without ourselves; but in these, that which is in us and from us, and hath been committed by us, is made matter of objection against, and disquietment unto us. That which is from within the man disquiets the man.

But ere I enter upon this inquiry I must premise a general caution, to set limits to our discourse therein.

And the caution is this: That we are to reserve and maintain this, both as an undoubted truth and as God's sole and royal prerogative, that he can alone both search and know the heart and conscience. As in like manner, That he can only by his wrath immediately make those deep and killing wounds and gashes with which men's souls are often here and hereafter externally wounded: (of which by way of caution also in the next chapter.) Which two glorious and incommunicable attributes of his, that eulogium of the word of God, Heb. iv. 12, 13, seems fully to hold forth unto us: where, as at the gate of Paradise was set a cherubim with a flaming sword to keep our fallen parents from ever entering in again, so there Christ is represented as

that supreme judge with whom, as at the 13th verse, we are eternally to have to do, (or, as the original, πρὸς ὃν ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος, to whom we are to give an account, for so λόγος is, Rom. xiv. 12, and elsewhere, taken ;) and he there stands with that dreadful sword of his word ready drawn and brandished,—that word by which he will judge men at the latter day, John xii. 48, and which therefore is called κριτικὸς, ver. 12, a judger of the thoughts, &c.,—and this to the end that by the awful terror thereof he might compel and drive those that hear the gospel to 'enter into that rest,' to which he had exhorted, ver. 11, which is set open by him for men now fallen to come into.

Which sword, as it hath a double edge, as there, so in his hand, who alone can wield it, it serves to a double use. That whereas in a judge two things are requisite to the complete performance of his office,—(1.) skill and knowledge to find out and examine the fact; (2.) power to execute and torture the malefactor when found guilty,—he shews how both these do transcendently and solely meet in him, by relating what power is found to be in his word, (which is the ensign of his justice and instrument of his power in judging,) which is said to be a 'discerner of the thoughts,' and a sword that pierceth and woundeth the soul and spirit with unutterable anguish. Which wounding power of the word is distinctly set forth (as some) from the beginning of the 12th verse to those last words, 'and is a discerner of the thoughts;' from whence, to the end of the 13th verse, that other, the searching and all-judging property of God and his word, is laid forth to us: but rather, as I conceive, the Apostle, in one continued metaphor, carries along the expression of both throughout the whole, though more eminently the one in that former part of the words, and the other in the latter; yet so as both are alike made the royalty of God, which is the thing we have in hand.

Neither needs it stumble any that this is there attributed only to the word of God, of which he only seems to speak, for that is all one as to ascribe it unto God; for as 'where the word of a king is, there is power,' says Solomon, Eccles. viii. 4, so, where the word of God is, there is the power of God, and so is it here to be understood: and therefore, as in other scriptures, his word is said to create, and by it the heavens to be established, &c. and also, Gal. iii. 8, in the like phrase of speech, the Scripture is said to foresee, that is, God foresaw, who writ the Scripture, so also here, to know and wound the heart. Which to be the Apostle's express intention here appears by the connexion of the 12th and 13th verses. For whereas, ver. 12, he begins with attributing this power unto the word, yet in the end he closeth his speech with transferring all that was said thereof upon God himself, ver. 13, 'with whom we have to do.'

To open the words a little more largely, so as to clear this assertion out of them, which it is necessary to premise. The words are, 'For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart: neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.'

And, first, of that sole searching power of the soul in this chapter, and of that other, the sole wounding power of the conscience, in the next chapter we shall have the like occasion to premise.

For the present; that searching, examining, and judging power of the word now in hand, he expresseth by an allusion to the anatomy of bodies; which

then, though not so frequently as now, was yet in use; or else to the cutting up of the sacrifices, whether those of the Jews or as it was used among the heathen, especially by the soothsayers, who curiously searched into every inward part, as we find in the prophet Ezekiel, chap. xxi. 21: and his similitude stands then, that look, what the entrails are to a sharp sword, or sacrificer's knife, or the like instruments of anatomy in a strong and skilful hand, such are all the most inward and secret parts of the heart, even those which are most difficult to be divided, unto this sword in God's hand, when he is pleased to use it to search heart and reins, and to discover and bring forth in judgment the secrets thereof. He can use this sword not only to unrip and strip off the outward clothes of outward and formal actions, and so present the soul naked, as his expression is, ver. 13; nor only to flay off all the skin, to excoriate, and so to see what lies under it, as the next word there, τετραχηλισμένα, which is translated 'opened,' doth sometimes signify; but, further, to cleave and cut up to the back-bone, for even so deep doth the signification of that word reach, that so all the inwards may appear, and lies so curiously divided and laid asunder, as to see and view apart what is each. 'It pierceth to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.' By which, grace and corruption are not so properly here to be understood, for then he would have rather said flesh and spirit; and besides, the persons he speaks this of are principally those who shall be found secret unbelievers, who have not spirit in that sense at all in them; but they are here used to express those two main powers of the heart: the soul,—that is, the inferior part, that more sensual part, wherein the affections are, as 1 Thess. v. 23 it is also used,—which it divides by discovering how close and inordinately all those affections cleave to sin; and then of the spirit,—that is, the superior part, of the understanding, conscience, &c.,—which it rips up by discovering how these plot and contrive the accomplishment of sin. 'Dividing;' that is, discovering apart, with difference, how things are carried severally in each: and withal, what correspondency and intercourse there is between these; how in and all our actions pass through them from the one to the other, even as blood and spirits do through the veins and arteries, in all the parts from each to other. And as in the body there are several regions, as anatomists call them, divided by partitions: the vital parts in the upper loft next the neck, in which are lodged the heart and lungs; the natural parts in that lower, and these divided by the midriff, as by a floor between them: so in the soul—to which haply Solomon alludes, when he calls the several powers of it 'the chambers of the belly,' Prov. xviii. 8, as some read it—here is the sensual part of the affections, the soul, &c., which is, as it were, in a distinct room from that more sublime and spiritual part, the spirit. And as the 'spirit of man'—that is, the conscience and understanding of a man—'searcheth all those chambers,' as it is there, (that is, 'knows what is in man,' as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. ii. 11; which yet when it doth so is not by an innate light, but with God's candle, as Solomon's expression here is; that is, by the word and the light thereof set up by him in it:) so here, the word, under another similitude,—namely, of a sword,—is said to put up and to discover all within those several regions. And in the spirit is said to discover what can be imagined, most retired and withdrawn, and so locked up as no eye could find it out, which he expresseth by mentioning such parts as are most inwardly seated of all other: the marrow, which we now is enclosed within the bones; and the joints, or ligaments by which the joints are knit and move; these it unbares and discovers also. Both which he interprets in the next words, 'and is a discoverer of the thoughts

and intentions of the heart,' which are a more plain interpretation of what he had expressed by those two metaphors. The utmost intention and end, in all our actions, that is as the marrow; because as the marrow gives moisture to the bones, so by these our ends, all our purposes and resolutions, by which we are supported in all our actions, are strengthened and confirmed. And then our devising thoughts or plottings, our contrivements and machinations, those by which we artificially do connect and hang together many joints of means to accomplish and bring to pass our intentions,—which thoughts of all others we strive to hide and conceal,—these are as the joints, or (as the word ἅρμοι rather implies) as the ligaments, and the sinews, and the tendons by which the joints do move; so these are they upon which our designs do move and turn: even all those *cogitationes compaginatæ*, plotting thoughts, the word it discovers and cuts up, and also judgeth and examineth, and passeth sentence upon them; yea, and that so exactly, as not the smallest fault can pass uncensured by it. It is as a curious critic in this review: κριτικὸς, it judgeth exactly, as critics use to do. So as by this anatomy which the word makes, all things in man, every creature, even the least *fibra*, the smallest sting in the heart, which would escape the sight of the most exact anatomist, are all 'naked and opened,' and cut up, 'before the eyes of him with whom we have to do.'

The reasons why God hath reserved this to himself are:—

1. It was for the glory of God that he should have one private cabinet among the creatures, which he alone should know and keep the key of, which might argue his omniscience; as also one place to be sanctified in, whither no creature's eye could pierce: that so the greatness of his glory might appear, namely, in this, that he is not worshipped outwardly only, as great ones are, but inwardly, 'in spirit and truth;' and that his glory is such as commands the inward parts, which no eye seeth but his own: so as a man will respect God so much as to sanctify him in secret when no creature looks upon him.

2. That God alone might be the judge and rewarder of men's ways, and so looked at by them, to whom alone men must give an account; which would draw the creature's eye alone upon him, when the strength and firstborn of all our actions are his subjects alone, and do come under his eye and view. Therefore it is said that he 'rewards men according to their works, whose heart he knows.' It was fit that he only should take upon him to reward who only could know the principles of all actions; in which the chief of the good or evil in the action lies. This is the great glory of God and Christ at the day of judgment, that 'they will discover the secrets of all hearts,' 1 Cor. iv. 5. It is not said so much of men's actions, that they shall be then discovered, as that the secrets of their hearts; for therein lies God's glory, which he will not give to any other.

This premised as a most necessary caution, I come to the disquisition of that query mentioned: How, and how far, Satan may come to know so much matter against us whereof to accuse us?

1. In general, it may be considered—

(1.) That he knows what ends, and intentions, and thoughts, and lusts such corrupt hearts as ours usually produce and bring forth in all men; and therefore can imagine what by-ends, &c., may be stirring in such and such actions, and so lay them to our charge; and so often hit right therein, and speak a man's heart thus at random. For our natures are apt to bring forth 'all concupiscence,' as the apostle says, Rom. vii. 8. Therefore if there were no more than he knows all temptations common to man's nature, he might

go far in accusing every man; he having keys of all sorts, sorted to all men's spirits, tries with every one which will enter. And as David's elder brother charged David, when he came into the wars, 'This is the pride and the naughtiness of thy heart,' guessing at his by-ends in it, so doth Satan; he often in like manner charges us by guess. Thus he did Job; 'Doth Job serve God for nought?' He knew such by-ends were in men's hearts, and so ventures to lay them to Job's charge also.

(2.) Though he should know very little of us, yet he may from some one particular which he doth know or suspect, cast in a suspicious thought about a man's estate; and so set the jealous heart a-work itself to search out more matter against itself. As in case of treason, the least hint given by some one sets the state a-work to examine the bottom of the business, and so to get all out. So as Satan often gives and casts in but a scruple, which proves as a theme for the heart itself to dilate upon, and the conscience upon inquiry finds matter against itself to prove and increase that surmise.—Thus in general. But—

2. He may more particularly know much against us to accuse us of, and so frame bills against us out of what he knows, and this first supposing he had no access to our inward parts, and that he had no further way of knowing of us than men have one of another, it being made the limits of man's knowledge, by God to Samuel, to 'judge by outward appearance;' yet all those advantages which men have to know one another by, he hath over us, more than any man can have, and all more eminently. For—

(1.) Those spirits can discern all corporeal actions, though not of all men at once,—for then why should Satan travel up and down the earth to review all in it?—yet in that distance is proportioned unto them. They understand not only by innate inbred species, but some things *per species acceptas a rebus*. They learn daily. Thus 'by the church,' the good angels are said to 'learn what they never knew before of the mysteries of the gospel, Eph. iii. 10. And though those species in them, and their manner of knowing corporeal things differs from ours, yet they are analogical with ours, and we no more know the manner how they should receive *species a rebus corporeis*, the images of all things done by bodily substances, than a blind man can imagine how men that see should receive in colours. Yet this we may be sure of, that all that the senses or mind of man can know, that they can also, for natural things are all *debita objecta*, due objects made for them: for they were therefore made to be discerned by intelligent creatures; and if by any, then by the most supreme and intellectual natures.

(2.) They make it their business to study men; it is their trade to go up and down and consider men: 'Hast thou not considered,' says God to Satan, 'my servant Job?' Satan useth to consider and study men; and as the Apostle exhorts to 'consider one another to provoke to love,' so Satan considers men to provoke to sin, and to tempt for sin unto despair.

(3.) He may be privy to our vocal confessions of sins to God or men; unto our laying open our own hearts to God in private prayers, or to others in trouble of conscience: therefore so much of the heart as is this way discovered he can and doth know. And why may not God permit him, and give him the liberty and advantage to accuse us, even of that which he comes to know by this means? It being for the trial of his servants, especially in case they have returned again to those sins which they confessed, and yet have not forsaken; it is just that then as the guilt of former sins returns upon us in such a case, so that Satan should be permitted afresh to charge us with them; and that, in this case, a man should lose the privilege of *sigillum*

confessionis, of the secresy and seal of confession, as I may so speak. And if God may permit a man to whom we have confessed, according to God's own ordinance, yet to tell things confessed, and to cast them in our teeth, as sometimes it hath fallen out; why may not Satan, the accuser of the brethren, sometimes be permitted to lay that to our charge which he only knew this way?

(4.) He is and can be present at all our more retired actions, and is privy to them, being with us at bed, board, in all companies. By means of this he can accuse us—

[1.] Of all gross actions done that are obvious to sense; which, indeed, are usually the greatest matter of accusation, and do lie upon us most heavily in such temptations, as David's murder and adultery did on him. 'My sin,' says he, 'is ever before me.' And these having pulled a man down, and put him into prison and clapped him up, our own consciences then may come in, with all our more privy corruptions, as lesser creditors use to do. And when once the soul hath, by means of the accusing of one foul act, given way to doubting, then all other privy corruptions join and offer themselves to accuse us also; for they 'lie at the door,' as God told Cain, ready for such an occasion.

[2.] Also he may by this be able to accuse us of all deadness, and drowsiness, and neglect in the performance of holy duties, as want of attention and quickness in them, for these are easily discerned by any one that is observant; and of the want of stirring affections, and also of neglect of holy conference in all companies, and the like. If a godly man were to follow a man up and down in all companies, how much might he know of a man and be able to accuse him of!

[3.] By such observations he may know a man's bosom sins. So he knew and observed Judas's bosom sin to be covetousness, and accordingly sorted his temptation to it.

(5.) By what he sees outwardly of our actions, he can many ways guess at inward corruptions, which are the principles of them. He hath all the ways which a wise discerning man hath, who should always watch a man, and set himself to study a man, and that hath opportunity to suggest when he pleaseth, on purpose for trial and discovery; all the ways such a man hath to know the heart Satan hath. And that which Solomon says of a wise man, that though 'the heart of man be deep, yet a man of understanding will fetch it out,' Prov. xx. 5, holds true of Satan much more. As, [1.] by comparing one action with another, one speech with another; so wise men guess at men's ends in things, and their respects that move them. [2.] By gestures. By a cast of a man's countenance and behaviour, men are often discerned; by the like may Satan see into us. Thus Joab discerned David's pride in his command for numbering the people, so as it was loathsome in his eyes. And if Joab discerned this by the outward carriage of the matter, how much more might Satan, that put in the motives to persuade him to it. The Jesuits bid those of their followers who are to deal with men, when they talk with any whose minds they would discern, still to observe their eyes, to see what alterations are in their countenances, as through which the mind is transparent; now Satan he is a good physiognomist, and he eyes a man. [3.] Further, he himself suggesting many motives and reasons in businesses this way and that way, casting in many by-ends and motives to be considered by us, he observes how the heart comes off at such and such suggestions, or where it stuck, and what suggestion it was that turned a man this way or that way, and fetched him off. The Jews might see what moved Pilate to

crucify Christ, because at that saying, as the text notes, that 'else he was an enemy to Cæsar,' he gave sentence. So Satan, when he stirred up David by proud arguments to number the people, he must needs know what pride was in his heart. Now—

(6.) Besides all this, how far he may have an insight into the fancy and the images therein, which follow and imitate the inward thoughts of the mind, as the shadow doth the body; and also into the passions, which are but the flowing and reflowing of corporal spirits, and in which the affections of the will discover themselves; this I leave to others to determine. For the present, this is certain, that although all the powers of the reasonable soul be fast locked up from him, as we shall shew, and the immediate acts which are immanent in the soul itself utterly hidden from him; and that, take the soul as it is the immediate subject and root of them, so *intuitivè* no devil can discern them, no more than one angel can discern the thoughts of another; yet *arguitivè*, and as they do *transire*, and appear, and are put forth in the body and corporal organs, outwardly in actions, or inwardly in the images of the fancy or the passions, and so, *quasi in alios*, and mediately, they may be very far discerned and looked into by angels. Which yet will nothing at all prejudge that prerogative which is given to God, when he is said alone to know and search the heart, but give its full allowance; nor that privilege which is given to the soul itself to enjoy, namely, that 'none should know the things of a man, but the spirit that is in man,' 1 Cor. ii. 11; as we shall have occasion to shew in the Appendix to this discourse.

Besides, therefore, these advantages and ways of knowledge, somewhat common to us men, each of other, they have a further and more near way of knowing the acts of the reasonable powers, the understanding and will, than we men can have; even as they have also a way of communicating their thoughts to us in a more intimate, close, secret manner, yet still such as falls short of an intuitive knowledge of them. They can go into a room further then we; and into a room which is next the privy chamber, which yet remains fast locked up unto them. As their power in all other things reacheth a degree higher than ours, so in this also. To open this a little:—

Those reasonable powers and faculties in us, the understanding and the will, the immediate immanent acts of which are thus in themselves fast locked up, being yet in this life drenched in the body and bodily organs, upon which their working doth depend: as, the understanding is joined to the fancy, which makes *parhelii*, and resemblances, and shadows of those thoughts the mind secretly conceives and forms, so as scarce any thoughts do stir but the fancy imitates them, and acts them as far as it is able; and the will also is conjoined with the affections, which are drenched and shew themselves in bodily organs and spirits, so as not any motion of the will puts itself forth, but more or less some affections of the body do stir with it; and therefore affections are as well defined by their motion in the body as by their seat in the will itself. As when anger is defined, *ira est ebullitio sanguinis circa cor*, a boiling of blood about the heart; and affections are but the flowings and reflowings of spirits to and from the heart.

Now both these, both phantasms and passions, all divines do grant that the devils may know, and that to know them they have a nearer access to us than men can have each to other; yea, and that they may discern them *intuitivè*, as we do things which are present before us: how else should they work upon fancy? And otherwise, there were no diabolical dreams; nor angelical neither, caused by good angels. But we find that a good angel dictated to Joseph a great article of faith—Christ's divinity and nativity.

It was done in a dream, and therefore to his fancy. So they inspired the Sibyls, and dictated prophecies, as was said. And so the evil angels prompted Saul's fancy. And this they do, not by creating new species and images, but *evocando*, calling forth the images there already. For the images of things in the fancy being corporal species, they can no more beget a new corporal image than they can make a body anew. And therefore, all the power of the angels cannot cause a blind man to dream of colours.

And therefore, their way in communicating their suggestions to us herein must be by discerning the species, to wit, of all words heard or read that lie in the fancy already; and so by ordering and composing them, even as a compositor in printing doth his letters that lie confused before him, into words and sentences, to represent to the reader's eye what he would have read by him: so he to the understanding, which doth naturally print off and take the impression off from the fancy of whatever is in it as fast as he doth set them. And by the like reason, that he can call these phantasms forth, and so view the species and images laid up there already, to set them thus as he pleaseth; by the same reason it must be supposed that he is as able to discern any of them in the fancy at any time, then when reason itself calls upon any of them, and maketh use of them, as it doth whenever it sets itself to think or muse. And these and all other operations of the sensitive powers they may view and see as truly, for aught I know, and as intuitively even, as we see colours and species of things in the eye of a man. So as these evil angels may, when God permits, get into the head, and see all the images and species in the fancy, and those that are in direct conjunction with the understanding, which it is then thinking and musing of; even as a man doth what images are in the apple of the eye of another man; and so by discerning those phantasms, which the understanding actually then vieweth and maketh use of, he may then judge what the mind is musing of. And again—

2. As we discern men's passions when they dye and affect the outward parts, as if shame dyes the face red, or fear paints it white; so may the angels more secretly discern the motion of them within us, which is the cause of this alteration without. They can go further than we men can; they can see the inward commotion of the spirits in our inward parts, even in their channels and springs, as in that bodily heart we carry within us, and in the veins and arteries, and so know what affections are stirring. And this is evident by this, in that they are able to work upon the passions also. Now, their power of working upon these affections ariseth from their knowing them, and skill to move and stir those spirits and humours electively, wherein these passions are seated. And herein their power of discerning us exceeds that in us men in discerning other men, as that of communicating their minds to us also doth. For as they can communicate secretly by fancy itself, we but by outward words and signs to the outward senses of others, so they can discern more secretly what is in the fancy, and not only what appears in the outward parts, which is yet but a room further that they get into, which we men cannot come to. So in like manner their power over our passions doth exceed also. They can see into the passions and discern the least rising of the tide, the least turn of the stream of affections in our veins, and in the corporal heart. Satan can discern those lesser aguish fits of passion that accompany any act of the will which men discern not. As also, they can stir those passions by working upon the humours and spirits they float in, which men cannot come to do. But of this great and necessary query, as also how by means of this he communicates all his temptations to us, more largely in an Appendix to be annexed to this treatise.

CHAPTER IX.

How able Satan is to work upon that third principle, the passions and corrupt affections, and bring home his false conclusions with terrors.

THUS we have seen how able Satan is to work upon those two forementioned principles, of carnal reason, and abuse it with false *majors;* and also upon conscience, in laying our sins to our charge, with misrepresentations of our estates. It remains now only, that we shew how he can stir and work upon the *passions and corrupt affections* in us, and make use of them; and so set on all those false conclusions—that we are hypocrites—thence deduced, with hideous and horrid fears and terrors.

1. And in respect to these terrors, as he is called a serpent, as was said, for sleights, and cunning reasonings, and wiles; so likewise a lion, of all beasts the strongest, Isa. xxxviii. 13.* A roaring lion, of all the terriblest, and most terrible in his roaring; whose roaring is therefore often in Scripture put to express the working of dreadfulness and horror: 'The lion roars, who will not tremble?' Amos iii. 8. And, as some have observed, and the Psalmist seems to intimate it, Ps. civ. 21, by his roaring he strikes such horror and amazement into all other beasts, as they stand still as exanimated, and so he seizeth and preys upon them as he pleaseth. And in this respect also of his working on the passions is it that those darts beforementioned are principally called fiery; namely, for that dolour, and anguish, and inflammation, and combustion they cause through the distempering the affections. Those fears which our own hearts engendered within us were but as smoke; these darts of his put a fire into them, and do cause them to flame and blaze. The allusion is to the poisoned darts which the Scythians of old, and other nations now, use in war, dipped in the blood and gall of asps and vipers; the venomous heat of which, like a fire in their flesh, killed the wounded by them, with torments the likest hell of any other. Which Job also alludes to, chap. vi. 4, 'The arrows of the Almighty are within me: the poison,' or, as others read it, the heat and fervour; we may use both, and read, 'the hot poison thereof drinks up my spirit,' even as fire preying upon moisture. And what were those arrows he speaks of there but terrors? So it follows, 'the terrors of God,' &c. In the same phrase of which that Corinthian is said to have been in danger to have been drunk up—καταποθῇ—as the word signifies, with over-much sorrow, when Satan had to do with him, 2 Cor. ii. 7; and the same word is again used of the devil, 1 Pet. v. 8, 'seeking whom to drink up.' So that as Satan inflames other members, and the inordinate lusts in them, with a superadded natural vehemency and violence; as the tongue, which, though of itself full of poison, is said to be 'set on fire from hell,' James iii. 16, that is, from Satan, (who is called hell, as in that speech, 'the gates of hell;' as the good angels, the noblest creatures, are

* It seems clearly to be not Satan, but God himself, that is so designated in this passage.—ED.

called heavens, Heb. vii. 26,) he inflaming men's tongues with an overplus of venom and malice, to wound men's names with; even as on the contrary the Holy Ghost did set on fire the apostles' tongues with zeal. As, I say, he doth thus inflame other members, so in like manner he can and doth put fire into those darts he wounds the conscience with; and thereby augments our fears and griefs, and causeth such disquietments and pangs, as that hell-fire, as it were, begins to flame in a man's conscience. As Christ is that 'brazen serpent,' so Satan is that 'fiery serpent' that can sting us by the guilt of sin.

And here I must bring in the like caution as I used in the former chapter; namely, that he works not these terrors by immediate impressions upon the conscience, which in that respect is subject to God's stroke alone, as to his knowledge alone. Which, as I intimated, I take to be that other principal part of the drift of those words, Heb. iv. 11, 12, 'The word of God is quick and powerful,' &c. For there he sets forth Christ to us, as was shewed, as a judge completely enabled for vengeance against us, not only in respect of an omnisciency to find us out in all our shiftings, but also, because a judge would not be much feared if he had only skill and knowledge, though never so much, to search and find out the guile and guilt of malefactors, if he were not armed with power to avenge and torture them; therefore withal, the Apostle's scope is to strike terror into their hearts in respect of that vengeance he can execute. And therefore his aim is to exhort them not to dally with God, or with his word; in which he had sworn, of those that believed not, 'they should not enter into his rest,' in the former verse. So as the purport of the words must necessarily also be supposed to be to shew the dreadful power of God, and of his word, in avenging itself upon the contemners of him and it, and not merely to describe his conscience, and knowing of the heart, but as joined also with power to pierce as deep in wounding of the soul as in knowing of it. Yea, and that so large an illustration of his knowledge is brought in but as a clearer demonstration of his power to punish, who can dive so deep into our hearts. As from whence we might argue and fear the stroke of that sword in his hand whose eyes are so piercing. And accordingly to set forth the dreadfulness of this his power, all those his expressions there used do as fully tend, as to set forth the other; and he likewise useth such a comparison as, both in the nature of the things and according to the more usual phrase of Scripture, doth more properly and abundantly intimate this slaying and wounding of men's souls that should be disobedient, by this his sword, than that other of searching the soul and spirit. As—

(1.) This word, says he, is quick and lively; so called not in respect of duration only, as abiding ever, but in respect to working and execution. Things that are exceeding operative, though inanimate, we call quick; so quicksilver, which runs through a man's bowels like hail-shot: and so oppositely, drugs and drinks that have lost their virtue, and are ineffectual, we call dead. And in respect to this energy and power to work upon men's hearts, is that in John vi. 63 to be understood. 'The words I speak,' says Christ, 'are spirit and life:' that is, are full of an operative principle. For an active working principle we use to call the spirit, as the spirit of wine, &c. In that therefore he says the word is quick, he notes out that that word is inspired with a principle, most quick, spiritual, and active, and fit to work as occasion is; that is, even with the Holy Spirit, who is as the internal form of it. And therefore—

(2.) Having thus intimated this internal form of working, he adds ἐνεργὴς,

powerful and mighty in operation, as noting out that power which flows from thence—that ability to produce strange effects upon the soul. These expressions carry report of more than of a skill and dexterity to search and know the heart only. And then—

(3.) He further instanceth in such operations of it, as the effects of that power, which are most dreadful, as the comparisons he useth do import: 'more piercing than any two-edged sword.' Now, as elsewhere the word is compared to an armoury of all sorts of weapons, and engines for war and vengeance,—'The weapons of our warfare are mighty,' &c., 2 Cor. x. 4,—in like manner here he more particularly resembles it to a sword, the most usual and most terrible of all the instruments of death which were then in use; the brandishing of which strikes paleness and horror into a man ere the stroke comes at him; which is usually put in Scripture to express vengeance, and more especially in the prophecy of Ezekiel. And also Ps. vii. 13, 'If he turn not, God hath whet his sword, and prepared his instruments of death;' that is, to inflict torments, and eternal torments also, as Deut. xxii. 42. And indeed, whatsoever doth torment, or cause dolour and anguish, is in Scripture called a sword; and the 'piercing with a sword' is used to express the most exquisite dolours: as Luke ii. 35, 'Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy soul also;' speaking to the blessed mother of Christ, and of that her anguish and grief, wherewith she should be cut even to the heart, when she should behold her Son upon the cross. Of whose dolours upon the cross likewise, the same expression is used, Ps. xxii. 20, when he prays, 'Deliver my soul from the sword.' And in this respect the word in Christ's hand is still, when he is spoken of as a judge, compared to a sword, Ps. xlv. 3; Rev. xix. 15; Isa. xlix. 2, and so here.

And we may further observe, how, thus to strike the more terror into their hearts in respect of the wounds and torments it inflicts, he goes further on to exaggerate the dread thereof. He says not only that it is as sharp, but more sharp, not than a sword of one edge, but than a two-edged sword; not than some, but than any two-edged sword. And further, to shew that he speaks it in relation unto wounding, and anguish, and torment it causeth in the soul, he mentioneth the division of such parts as are not only most hid and inward, in relation to discovery,—for such the marrow is, being covered with the bones, and the ligaments covered with flesh,—but which are also of most exquisite sense, and the wounding of which causeth the greatest dolour. He saith, it pierceth to the dividing the marrow, and therefore cuts through the bones; for so it must needs be supposed to do, when it is said to reach unto the marrow. Now the 'breaking of the bones' is still put to express those exquisite and unsupportable terrors and dolours of conscience, and woundings of the spirit, which a man cannot bear or sustain; for when the bones are broken, a man cannot stand nor support himself. And the like is also the cutting of the ligaments, the nerves, sinews, and arteries,* those *ἁρμοί* that knit the joints, which are the organs of sense and motion. Again, he says, it divideth not only the soul,—that is, the sensual part, the passions of the mind, as wounding them,—but *τε καὶ πνεύματος*, that is, the spirit also, which is with an emphasis expressed; and his meaning is not so much that it divideth the soul from the spirit, as some have understood it, but the soul *and* spirit also. It is a two-edged sword, and can at one blow strike through both; this 'axe strikes at the root,' at the spirit, which, when 'wounded, who can bear?' says Solomon. And then he concludes, ver. 13, that, as

* It can scarcely be necessary to point out, that the author's deficiency of anatomical knowledge in no way vitiates his argument.—ED.

'before him all things are naked;' so also τετραχηλισμένα, that is, they lie with their throats cut, if he but strike them dead and speechless at his feet, as Theodoret expounds that word, which is translated 'opened.' Now thus far—that is, to this spirit in man—no created sword can reach; they turn edge at it: but even this the word reacheth, and that alone. So as the summary drift of all herein is the same which Christ expressed elsewhere in other words, to exhort them to fear that God, whose sword and powerful word is able thus alone to wound; and 'not to fear those who can only' wound and 'kill the body,' and but reach to the sensual soul that is drenched in it, but cannot wound or kill the spirit, which God alone can do, and no mere creature whatsoever. And therefore, in all our thoughts and fears of Satan's power of knowing our sins, or troubling or disquieting our spirits, as also throughout this discourse, we are to set such bounds as that this incommunicable royalty of God, and of his word, may be reserved unentrenched upon; namely, that he alone knows, and can immediately wound the spirit and conscience. Both which at once this place held out unto us, which made me the largelier to insist upon the opening of it.

2. But yet although Satan cannot immediately wound the conscience, and make impressions of God's wrath upon it; for as no creature can shed abroad God's love, and cause the creature to taste the sweetness of it, so nor the bitterness of his wrath, but God is his own reporter of both; yet—

(1.) When the Holy Ghost hath lashed and whipped the conscience, and made it tender once and fetched off the skin, Satan then may fret it more and more, and be still rubbing upon the sore, by his horrid suggestions and false fears cast in. And—

(2.) He can, by renewing the experimental remembrance of those lashes which the soul hath had from the Spirit, amaze the soul with fears of an infinitely sorer vengeance yet to come; and flash representations of hell-fire in their consciences, from those real glimpses they have already felt, in such a manner as to wilder the soul into vast and unthought-of horrors. And then—

(3.) He can bring home all the threatenings that are thundered forth in the word against hypocrites and men unregenerate, and discharge them all with much violence and noise upon a poor doubting soul. He can and doth present and shew his prisoners those terrible chains, and racks, and other 'instruments of death,' as the Psalmist calls them, Ps. vii. 13, which God hath prepared against sinners, and hath stored up in that great armoury of his word, which he 'hath in a readiness to revenge all disobedience,' 2 Cor. x. 6. With the rattling of which chains, &c., Satan can make a noise in the conscience of a poor sinner, to affright him. Which he is the more enabled to do, out of experience of such terrors in himself; 'being bound up in chains everlasting, under darkness, to the judgment of the great day,' Jude 6. And as a son of consolation and child of light is enabled 'to comfort others the more, by the comfort wherewith he hath been comforted of God;' so this prince of darkness is the more powerful to terrify weak consciences that are ensnared with the cords of their own sins, by reason of the terrors which he hath received from the Lord. And therefore in Scripture, as a power in sin is attributed to him, so the 'power of death,' as Heb. ii. 14; where by death is meant not so much that bodily as that eternal death, to which, as the proper punishment of sin, the guilt of it doth bind us over. Which power of his is not that of the judge in sentencing to death, or casting men to hell, which is a special flower of Christ's crown; who, Rev. i. 18, 'hath the keys of hell and death' at his girdle; and of God's, who is there-

fore only to be feared, because 'he only can cast body and soul into hell.' Nor is it as if he were the main tormentor and executioner of men's souls, after that great day, seeing that they are to be tormented by that fire which in common 'was prepared for the devils' themselves. And who is it that doth torment them? It is therefore principally meant, [1.] of that power and advantage he obtained over sinners when he had seduced them; so as to come boldly as a pleader against them, enabled with authority to urge God's righteous law and word, and to call upon, and to provoke his justice to condemn poor sinners, and adjudge them unto death: until Christ, that righteous advocate, despoiled him of those his pleas and power, by that satisfaction of his, which before the law had put into his hands; and so he 'destroyed him that had the power of death,' enervating all his pleas and terrors. And, [2.] the meaning is, that as he hath this power in God's court over the sentence of death upon poor sinners, so also in our consciences, to urge the law upon us, and to plead all that the law says against them that are under the law, and to put us into the fears of that death threatened therein; and to increase in us the fears of that death, by presenting to us the terrors of the law, unto which, in respect of natural conscience, men of themselves are subject all their life long. And unto this latter power hath that 'power of death' there especial reference; for those words, 'and deliver them who through fear of death were subject to bondage all their life long,' follow in the next verse, ver. 15. And because the children of God, whilst in this life, as they 'know but in part,' so they love but in part, and so far as love remains imperfect, so far 'fear, which hath torment,' keeps possession; for it is 'perfect love only that casts out all fear,' 1 John iv. 18: hence therefore, so far as slavish fear remains, so far they may be subject to be terrified by him that hath power of death; and that over all those that are in any degree subject to the fear of it whilst in this life. And—

(4.) He can immediately, by his own power, stir the passions of fear and grief, &c., excite them beyond nature, as the winds can raise the billows in the sea, and make the floods to make a noise; so can he a tumult in the affections, and put all the soul into a hurry and violent perturbation. He is the prince of the airy part of the little world in man, as well as of that elementary region in the great world; and so can raise unnatural storms and vapours that shall darken reason, and cause such thunders and lightnings as shall hurl all into a black confusion, such as if hell and the soul would presently come together. And though it is true that he cannot turn the stream and current of our affections back,—God only can turn this Jordan back,—yet he can drive them faster, and cause them to swell above their natural channels; that as a man possessed hath the strength of ten men in him, (as that man, Luke viii. 29,) so shall the affections have that are blown up by him, as we may see in David. What a strong mind do we find in him, so needlessly to number the people, 2 Sam. xxiv., against all reason as well as religion, and the persuasion, yea, opposition, not of Joab only, but others also of his counsellors, 'the captains of the host!' A man would wonder that a man so holy and wise should be so transported to do an act so foolish, as himself saw afterwards: 'I have done very foolishly,' says he, ver. 10; yea, and so grossly sinful, as that it was abominable in the eyes of Joab, 1 Chron. xxi. 6, one that seemeth by his other carriages to have had but nature in him. But the devil was in it; so ver. 1, 'Satan provoked David to number the people,' by raising up such an affection and inclination in him.

The like appears in the affection of love; which how strongly hath Satan drawn forth in some, even to madness, towards such as before, and also after

his fascination was overpast, they have loathed and hated above all others, is evident in stories by many instances. And as he can raise up other passions in us, so also fears and terrors, jealousies and distrusts; to 'fear where no fear is.' And thus he handled Saul, when God left him to him: 'An evil spirit from the Lord troubled him,' or, as most read it, and our margin varies it, 'terrified him,' 1 Sam. xvi. 15. And in the raising up of these affections of fear, and the like, he works more than simply morally,—that is, than by bare propounding such objects as shall move them, which men can only do,—but, further also, physically, by stirring such humours in the body, which such passions do act and stir in. And so those humours in the body, which shall put a man into a timorous and trembling disposition, he can electively work upon as he pleaseth.

And then also, he can disturb the phantasms in the head, the organs of the understanding; as in him, Luke viii. 35, who, through Satan's working, is intimated not to have been 'in his right mind.' And when he hath thus distempered and disordered all in a man, and put a man to such dispositions, to fears, &c., then he comes with his suggestions, and speaks nothing but of wrath and terrors, and of the threatenings, and of the heinousness of a man's sins, the fearfulness of God's wrath, unto that conscience that is troubled. And then look, as when a man's choler is up, every small thing provokes him; so now, when fear and melancholy are excited, every suggestion, every surmise doth strike the soul through and through with horrid fears and jealousies. And thus, though not immediately, yet through the means of these mists and vapours, and fogs raised, which environ and darken this sun, he works upon the conscience; and therefore we see, by experience, that he prevails most in this sort of temptations with melancholy tempers, whom, dwelling in dark shops, he much deceives with false colours and glosses. And when once affections are up and do cloud the mind, then multitudes of troublesome thoughts arise, and every suggestion suitable to that passion takes and prevails with a man's spirit; as appears by that speech of Christ, Luke xxiv. 38, 'Why are ye troubled,' or afraid, 'and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?' Passions, like to heavy weights hung upon a clock, do not only make the wheels, the thoughts, move faster, but also pervert them and wrest them the wrong way; so as to a heart thus distempered all things come to be presented amiss, even as to a bloodshot eye all things seem red. In a word, as he deludes his enthusiasts by setting on and backing their false opinions and illusions with joys and ravishments of spirits, which differ as much from the joys of the Holy Ghost, which are unspeakable and glorious, as heaven from earth; so he can and doth back his false reasonings and accusations to holy men about their estates with abundance of terror and disturbance, which also differs as much from the impressions of God's wrath made immediately by the Spirit upon the conscience, as those joys are found to do.

CHAPTER X.

clusion of this discourse about Satan.—Seven advantages, in common, Satan hath over us in all those forementioned dealings.

r a general conclusion to this, and all the rest of this discourse about working on us, I will but only mention some of those great and many ages he hath in all these his false reasonings and accusations over us, et them on, and to fasten his slanders and false conclusions thence de- and to persuade the mind of them. Which I therefore bring in here, g common to all those particulars which have been related.

t is no small advantage that he can familiarly and frequently suggest gain and again unto us. The frequency of any thought that comes in nd again, that lies by us and haunts us, hath secretly the force of an nt to persuade us to think it is so. We use to say, I have thought n and again. A cunning flatterer, that is continually suggesting, and all hints and occasions so to do, may at last put hard to work out and a dear friend, and to make one jealous of him. As the judge l to her importunity, Luke xviii. 5, so is the mind apt to yield to a tion that haunts it, and importunately presents itself, yea, though it pass a false sentence against a man's self. And—

He can also, and doth, represent a multitude of reasonings and con- ions together at once, all tending to confirm the same persuasion. He metimes bring in a cloud of witnesses and instances to prove us hypo- and environ the mind round about with them, that, look which way it ; sees nothing else. As he represented to Christ 'all the glory of the in the twinkling of an eye,' so he can do a man's sins, &c.; that a man ave a general prospect of them, and see nothing else, look which way l. And what force this must needs have to prevail with the mind and ent to assent, experience shews. As when a man doubting of a truth hing controverted, reads an opposite party, presenting all that can be r the other side alone, it often staggers him, and for the present wins ins his opinion to that side, till he reads and considers what is said to ntrary; yea, though a man is confirmed and settled in the truth, yet mes a man shall have an army of arguments on the other side come n him, so ranked and ordered as for the present shall shake and stagger And so it must needs be in the agitation of this great controversy about 's estate, when Satan shall muster and marshal up an army of objec- t once together, and not scatteredly; as he is able to do.

He is able to hold the intention of the mind so to them, as to keep off t which should any way comfort: he can turn down that column in ves of our heart wherein grace or anything that may comfort is writ- d turn over only, and hold our eyes fixed to read nothing but that wherein our errata and sins are written; so as to cause a man's soul get all good,'—as, Lam. iii. 17, the church in desertion is said to do,

—and to 'forget his own mercies,' as Jonah speaks. He can multiply suggestions so fast, and come in with such a tempest, that as Job complains, chap. ix. 18, he will not 'suffer them to take breath.' And therefore the Apostle calls them the 'buffeting of Satan,' 2 Cor. xii. 7; because, like unto buffetings, they come in thick and threefold upon a man's spirit, so as a man's spirit cannot take breath. He rains down temptations sometimes, not by drops, as in ordinary rains, but by spouts, as mariners call them, when a cloud melts, as in hot countries, suddenly, and falls by wholesale, and often sinks a ship. 'He breaks me with a tempest,' says Job, in the place forementioned. He speaks it of God, but such like tempests Satan also raiseth.

4. He adds weight to his lying accusations and false reasonings by an imperious and obstreperous affirmation that so it is; he suggests not reasons only that are fitted to persuade, but sets them on with words of affirmation therewithal suggested. And so, like as in reasoning a weak spirit is oftentimes borne down by a stronger, not by force of argument so much as by strength and violence of spirit; for many, when the 'iron is blunt,' and their arguments 'want edge, put to the more strength,' (as Solomon speaks, Eccles. x. 10,) and so prevail; and so doth Satan, he being a spirit of greater strength than ours by creation, and guilt also further weakening us in arguing with him. Cunning pleaders may so argue the case, with such violence and confidence, that as Socrates said when his accusers had done, that if he had not been very innocent he should have suspected himself guilty; how much more, when the accusation shall fall upon persons that are as guilty, as we all are, and the thing also impleaded be that which we are already suspicious of? What a man already fears he easily believes, as what a man hopes, *quod metuunt, facile credunt.* We see that there falls out often in opinions a preconceit which exceedingly sways the mind, a giving of mind that such a thing is so or so; and in such a case Satan can strike in exceedingly to strengthen such a conceit. This I take to be implied in that phrase, 2 Thess. ii. 2, where the Apostle gives warning they should not be troubled 'neither *by spirit* nor by word, to think the day of judgment was at hand.' By *spirit* he means a pretence and opinion of some revelation, concerning something which a man's own private conceit and imagination inclined him so to think; thus, 1 John iv. 1, spirit is also taken. And thus oftentimes when Satan perceives the mind inclined to think so or so, he adds weight unto the balance; and so a man is given up to the efficacy of delusion. As we see in those false prophets which the Apostle there speaks of, when he says, 'Believe not every spirit, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.' Thus likewise those false prophets in Micah became confident of the truth of their prophecies, 'that walk in the spirit and in falsehood,' says the prophet, chap. ii. 11. They took up such conceits, and the devil he joined therewith and confirmed them in them. Now, as Satan by false revelations confirms enthusiasts in their opinions and conceits, so he joins with the jealousies of believers and puts weight into the balance, strongly swaying them to judge amiss of their estates.

5. In that he, as was said, backeth his false conclusions thence deduced with terrors, &c., this becomes an argument to sense; and such arguments do exceedingly carry on the judgment in our opinion of things. A conceit that comes in with joy, we are apt to conclude is true; and so in like manner what comes in with terror. Such impressions are as it were a seal to what is suggested to confirm it. And as the Holy Ghost 'sealeth his instructions,' Job xxxiii. 16, with impressions of joy, &c., so doth Satan his temptations with impressions of fear and disquietment. If a man hath a dream with any

strong impression, a man is apt to give heed to it, to think there is something in it: that which made Nebuchadnezzar think there must needs be something in that of his, Dan. ii., iv., when yet he had forgot what it was, was that it made 'him afraid, and his thoughts troubled him,' ver. 5.

6. A sixth advantage is, that he suggests and works all these impressions undiscerned at all by us to be from him, so as we know not but that they are our own thoughts, yea, sometimes think that they be from the Holy Ghost, working as the spirit of bondage in us. This is also an exceeding great advantage; as it would be to an enemy to have gotten the opposites' own watchword, their own colours. This causeth us readily to yield and open the gates to him. And though when the temptation is over we perceive his delusion in it, yet still, because we cannot discern his suggestions from our own thoughts when upon us, when we are in the mist and eclipse, therefore he can come again and again with the same temptation, to-day, and to-morrow, and the next day, and we perceive it not: which if we did, we should not listen to it, no more than we would to one who had formerly deceived us. Thus Ahab's prophets knew not that Satan was a lying spirit in them, for says one of them to Micaiah, 'When went the Spirit of God from me to you?' Those 'strong delusions,' 2 Thess. ii. 11, could not have prevailed upon their minds to have 'believed a lie,' had it been discerned by them that Satan had suggested them. Peter knew not that Satan did by him tempt his Master to spare himself: which yet Christ perceived, and therefore called him Satan.

7. Last of all, a man can no way avoid his suggestions, nor subduce himself from them; neither can any take Satan off from a man but God. He must rebuke him, none else can. A poor soul fights with Satan in this darkness like unto a man that is assaulted by one that carries a dark lantern, who can see the assaulted, and how to buffet him, and follows him wherever he goes; whereas the poor man cannot see him, nor who it is that strikes him, nor be aware how to ward the blow. Therefore the Apostle, when buffeted by Satan, 1 Cor. xii., knew not what to do, but only to have recourse to God by prayer: for he could no more avoid or run away from those suggestions than from himself. Nor could all the saints on earth any other way have freed him: none, till God should cause him to depart.

CHAPTER XI.

The second general head: The cases wherein God leaves his unto this darkness.—First, three cases extraordinary.

II. HAVING despatched the efficient causes of this darkness,—the causes physical,—I now proceed to the *cases* wherein, and *ends* for which, God leaves his children to such a condition: the causes moral. The cases, they were the second general head I propounded to be handled; and they are either *extraordinary* or *ordinary*.

1. Extraordinary; as—

(1.) Out of his prerogative.

(2.) In case he means to make a man eminently wise, and able to comfort others.

(3.) In case of extraordinary comforts and revelations.

(1.) What if God will use his absoluteness and prerogative in this his dealing with his children, and proceed therein according to no ruled case or precedent? This he may do, and, as it is thought, in Job's case he did; who is thought by some to be set up as a type, among the Gentiles, of Christ at his crucifying, who was to be left by his apostles, forsaken of God, &c. And though Job's desertion began but with his estate, children, and body, yet it pierced further in the end, and seized upon his spirit; this we read nowhere of him, yet it was seen in God's withdrawing himself in the comfort of his presence, and in Satan's making him a butt to spend his arrows on. And yet, although the Lord had cause enough against him, yet no cause, as I remember, is pleaded. But it is resolved into an extraordinary dealing, wherein God took a liberty to glorify himself, by singling out one of his stoutest, valiantest champions, and setting him hand to hand to wrestle with the powers of darkness. And because Satan was, as it were, not hard enough for him, he turned enemy himself, Job xiii. 24. None more just than he before; the Lord, you know, glories in him: none ever led a stricter life, read chap. xxxi.: no man kept more in awe, and that by fearing such a desertion aforehand; which was the only way to prevent it, for what a man fears he prays much against; which he expresses when, complaining, he says, chap. iii. 25, that 'though he feared it, yet it came,' implying that it was not ordinary; nor indeed is it so. And although Job justifies himself too far, yet this was it which made him so stoutly to plead his own cause, that he could find no precedent, no ruled case of the like proceeding. And therefore Elihu, who took both God's part and Job's, and stepped up as a moderator, and as one 'in God's stead' to decide the matter, resolves it most of all into God's prerogative, though not without Job's desert; yet not such as according to which God ordinarily proceedeth, not so severely with others, as appears by the 34th chapter. And to that end he set forth God's greatness in the 36th and 37th chapters. And thus also God himself, when he

came to plead with Job about it, and to shew him a reason of it, he only tells him how great a God he was, and therefore might do as he pleased; and useth no other arguments in the 38th, 39th, 40th, and 41st chapters.

God indeed never wants a cause, nor doth deal thus where sin is not; yet, as is said of the young man, that he was blind, 'not for his sin, nor his parents',' yet not without it, 'but for the glory of God,' it was an act of God's prerogative: so here. God hath higher ends of glorifying himself in the patience, the victory, and the conquest of such a champion as Job was; and of confuting the devil, who accused him of not 'serving God for nought;' the falseness of which to demonstrate, God tries conclusions with him: as also to confute the opinions which in those days were generally received, as may seem by his friends' arguings, and also by the 73d Psalm, that godly men did prosper and flourish outwardly, according to their godliness. For these and the like reasons God did it. However, Elihu gives Job this good and seasonable counsel, to make this use of it, to 'search into his sins,' chap. xxxiv. 31, 32. And God might well take liberty to deal thus with Job, because he could make him amends, as afterward he did, in restoring double to him; and indeed it was but the concealing a while of his love, as many parents love to do by their children, and yet to shew it the more in real effects, as God even then did, in making him more than a conqueror.

(2.) A second case extraordinary is, when he intends to make a man a wise, able, skilful, and a strong Christian; wise, namely, in this, which is the greatest learning and wisdom in the world, experimentally to comfort others.

This may seem to be the reason of this his dealing with Heman. Heman was brought up in this school of temptation, and kept in this form from a youth, Ps. lxxxviii. 15. He was put soon to it; and so deep lessons had he set him, as he had like to have lost his wits, as he says there. Yet in the end, when God raised him up again, this Heman, who lived about David and Solomon's time, is reckoned among the wisest of his time, and one of the four that were next to Solomon for wisdom, 1 Kings iv. 31. So that great Apostle was a man exposed to the same combats that others were; he was buffeted by Satan, 2 Cor. xii., filled with inward terrors, as well as those without. What was this for? Not so much for any personal cause of his own, as to make him able to comfort others, 2 Cor. i. 4, 5. For that comfort which answereth a temptation in one man's heart will answer the same in another's: when temptations have the same wards, that key which unlocked one man's bolts will serve and answer to another's.

It is not every word that will comfort a weary soul, but only 'a word in season,' ver. 4 of this 50th of Isaiah; that is, which is fitted to the party's case. Now, who are they who are furnished with such apt, and fit, and seasonable considerations to comfort such, but those who have had the same temptations, and have been in the like distresses? This art of speaking peace and words of comfort in season is the greatest wisdom in the world, and is not learned but in Heman's school. Temptation was one of Luther's masters. And therefore of all abilities of the ministry, Christ in this chapter instanceth in this, ver. 4, and calleth the tongue of him that is able to speak seasonably to weary souls, 'the tongue of the learned;' and therefore, Job xxxiii. 23, to raise up one 'whose soul draws nigh to the grave,' is said to be the work of 'one of a thousand.' Which is easily granted, if you consider the danger of such a distress. In Scripture it is called the 'breaking the bones,' Ps. li., because the strength of a man's spirit that should uphold it, as the bones the body, sinks within him. Now, to be a bone-setter is not every

man's skill; he must have special art and cunning, and withal a lady's han as we use to say, that is, meekness and pity; which also are never kindl but when we have tasted the like, or may fear the like. The Apostle con mands them to set such a one in joint again, Gal. vi. 1, καταρτίζετε, as th word signifies, 'lest thou also be tempted;' and it is the work of one that spiritual, 'You that are spiritual restore such a one.' It requires skill t get out every shiver, to meet with every scruple, and set all straight agai It is also called the wounding of the spirit; so Solomon, 'A wounded spir who can bear?' Prov. xviii. 14. As the power of sin wounds, so the gui also; and the one as incurably as the other: and it being the spirit of a ma which is wounded, that which must heal it must be something dropped in the heart, that may come at the spirit. And there are to be peculiar electi plasters to heal these wounds, because these wounds are often differin Some objections there are that often the learnedest men never met with books; and Satan hath 'devised methods,' Eph. vi., of tempting souls c serted, which he useth again and again: and a man shall not know the depths, and fathom them, unless he hath been 'in the depths' himself, Heman speaks; and then he shall see such wonders of God in those dee which none else ever saw, and thereby gain such wisdom as to be able encourage others, by his example, to trust in God and call on him; so Dav Ps. xxxii. 5, 6.

(3.) The third case extraordinary; God doth desert, in case a man hath h or is to have, from God an abundance of revelations and comforts.

[1.] First, in case he hath already had abundant revelations from God. after that glorious testimony given to Christ at his baptism, 'This is my loved Son,' &c., Matt. iii. 17; 'then was Jesus led aside to be tempted,' Ma iv. 1. He points out the time to this very purpose. In like manner doth G often deal with the members of Christ for the season and time of their des tions and temptations. This was also that great Apostle's case, 2 Cor. xii. 'Lest I should be exalted above measure, through abundance of revelatio a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet me.' That which he calls there 't thorn in the flesh,' that pricked him, is meant rather I think of a desertio and leaving him to distress of spirit, than of a lust. For his scope is, 'glory in his afflictions,' ver. 9, 10. Now if it had been a lust, it had not bee thing to have been gloried in. Again, it was a 'messenger of Satan,' whi imports something external; and it buffeted him, he was as a mere patie in it, as a man buffeted is. In the exercise of lusts our spirits are acti And besides, he prayed it might depart; which phrase would seem to n out something external. God had took him aside into heaven, and spo wonderful things to him, and when he comes down again, Satan must ta him to task and batter him; the flesh would have grown proud if it had n been thus beaten black and blue. He had been in heaven, and heard t language of angels and saints, 'things not to be uttered;' and now he m hear by devils the language of hell. This buffeting, I take it, was by Sata cal injections.

[2.] Secondly, before God doth dispense great revelations and comforts, doth sometimes desert. And as before great distresses, which he means lead his children into, he fills their hearts with joy unspeakable and glorio to strengthen them against the approaching conflict, (thus God, to heart his Son against that great agony in the garden and combat on the cro transfigureth him on the mount first;) so, on the contrary, sometimes bef great revelations and comforts, to make them sweet and the more welcon

God useth to withdraw himself then most; thereby preparing the heart for them, as physicians do the body for cordials. The greatest spring-tide of comfort comes in upon the lowest ebb of distress. Distress enlargeth the heart, and makes it thirst after comfort the more, whereby it is made more capable of consolation; for that rule holds usually true, 2 Cor. i. 5, that 'as sufferings abound, so comforts shall abound also.'

CHAPTER XII.

The cases ordinary wherein God doth leave his in darkness.

2. Now, secondly, we come to the more ordinary cases wherein God dispenseth this darkness. Ere I name particulars, I will premise concerning them this general rule: We shall find that God goes not constantly by the same rule in the dispensation of them,—so as no man can say that in such and such cases God will and doth desert men, or that he always doth so,—but is various in his dealings herein. For some men he leaves for a while in darkness, in and upon and immediately after their conversion; their sun riseth in an eclipse, and continueth so till noon, yea, till their night. On the contrary, towards others sometimes he never shines in more comforts on them than at their first conversion. Again, some he deserts upon a gross sin committed; to others he never reveals himself more at any time than after a gross sin humbled for and repented of, thereby to shew the freeness of his grace. So likewise, some that have less grace and have lived more loosely, he fills their sails at death, and they have 'abundant entrance,' with full sail, into the 'kingdom of Christ.' Others that have walked more strictly with God, and whose ends you would expect should be most glorious, he leaves to fears and doubts, and their sun doth set in a cloud.

And the reasons why God is thus various in these his dealings is both because spiritual comforts tend not simply *ad esse*, but *bene esse;* not to the absolute being of a Christian, but his comfortable well-being: and also because in respect of their dispensation they are to be reckoned in the rank of temporal rewards; and though light and assurance is not an earthly but a heavenly blessing, yet it is but a temporary blessing. And therefore, as the promises of other temporal good things are not absolute, no more are the promises to give assurance to a believer absolute, as those to give him heaven and salvation are. Therefore likewise, on the contrary, darkness and distress of conscience is but a temporal chastisement, as outward crosses are, differing from them only in the matter of them; the one being conversant about things of the outward man; this of the inward, namely, a man's spiritual estate. Hence, therefore, in the dispensation of both, though God always goes by some rule, as in all other dealings of his, yet so as he varies and deals differently with his children therein; as he doth in dispensing outward prosperity and adversity, 'setting the one against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him,' as Solomon says, Eccles. vii. 14, that is, gives such cross and contrary opposite instances in both kinds, that men might not 'find him out' in these ways, or 'trace' him, as the phrase is, Rom. xi. 33, not so as to say certainly and infallibly what he means to do in such and such cases. Indeed, in the world to come, he makes even with all the world, how differing soever his dispensations of rewards or punishments have been here; and what is behindhand to any one, he then pays with respect to what they have received. Thus in matter of spiritual joy and assurance, God may

vouchsafe it to one that hath not feared and obeyed him so much as one that walks in darkness; but then if any one hath received more earnest-pennies beforehand, and hath not walked answerably, God considers it as an aggravation of his sin, as he did in Solomon, whose sin is aggravated by this, 1 Kings xi. 9, 10, that he sinned against God, who 'had appeared to him twice.' Otherwise, if these comforts make a man, in any proportion to such cost, more fruitful than others are, I see not but that God, who crowns his own graces, will reward them the more; this being one means sanctified to some to work more grace, as afflictions are to others. Thus it is in like manner in desertings and distress of mind; they being a temporal punishment, God is as various in them. So as one of more grace, or whom God intends more grace unto, shall be afflicted and forsaken, when one of less shall 'reign as king,' as it is said of the Corinthians, 1 Cor. iv. 8, in case of worldly prosperity. So he shall have peace and liberty of mind, triumph over Satan, and hell, and discomfort; when apostles in comparison—that is, men eminent in grace—are, in respect of spiritual conflicts, made 'spectacles to angels and men.'

This rule premised, the ordinary cases follow:—

(1.) First, in case of carnal confidence. Thus, Ps. xxx., David had been in great distress of mind for a while, as appears by what is said, ver. 3, 5, that 'though heaviness be over-night, yet joy cometh in the morning;' and in this sunshine David looks about him, and sees never a cloud appear in view that might again eclipse his comfort. Then he grew confident, upon no other ground but present sense, thinking it would always be so with him, and so trusted in that comfort he had at present, as if now he could never have been troubled so again, as in such cases good souls are apt to think: 'Now I shall never be removed,' says David. This was carnal confidence, and God, to confound it, hides himself again, ver. 7.

Now, carnal confidence is either—

[1.] First, when we trust to false signs shuffled in among true; which is incident even to believers that are in the state of grace, and have good evidences to shew for it; who yet, together with those sound evidences, do often rake together many other signs that are but probable, yea, and which are deceitful, and but common to hypocrites. This we are apt to do, to take many things as infallible signs which are not. As many are said in Daniel to cleave to the better side by flattery; so in a man's heart, many false signs will come in, and flatter a man, and give their testimony, and speak the same thing true evidences do. Now God, to discover which are false, and which are not, leaves a man; and then he will find all his false signs to leave him, as flatterers use to do; and to be but as broken teeth among those which are sound and whole, to fail and disquiet him; like reeds that break when any stress is put to them, and so to run into his hand. Or—

[2.] Secondly, when we put too much of our confidence upon signs, though true, and trust too much to comforts and former revelations, and witnesses of God's Spirit, and to our graces, which are all but creatures, acts of God upon us and in us. When, therefore, we let all the weight of our support to hang on these, God in this case often leaves us, 'that no flesh should rejoice in his presence.' Or—

[3.] Thirdly, when we think graces and comforts are so rooted in ourselves, that we neglect God and Christ, for the upholding, increase, and exercise of them; then God withdraws the light of these, that we may have recourse to the spring and well-head. As too much confidence in the power of inherent grace caused Christ to leave Peter to the power of sin, so the like

confidence also in the power of grace, causeth God to leave us to the guilt of, and terrors that come by, sin.

(2.) The second case: for neglecting such precious opportunities of comforts and refreshings as God hath vouchsafed; as for the neglect of holy duties, wherein God did offer to draw nigh to us, the sacraments, prayer, &c. So, Cant. v. 4–7, Christ stood at the door and knocked; that is, moved the heart of the church there to pay or perform the like duty in which he useth to come into the heart and visit it; he offered to assist her, and began to enlarge and prepare her heart, but she made excuses. Upon this, Christ went presently away; only he left behind him an impression, a scent of himself in her heart, ver. 4–6, enough to stir her up to seek him, in the sense of the want of him; as in desertion God useth to do.

(3.) Thirdly, in case of not exercising the graces which a man hath, not stirring them up, &c.; when Christians are, as it were, between sleeping and waking, which was the church's condition in that Cant. v. 2; then also Christ deserts. To perform duties with the inward man half awake, as it were, and half asleep; to pray as if we prayed not, (as, on the contrary, we are 'to use the world as if we used it not;) thus to do the work of the Lord negligently, this provoketh God to absent himself; as he did there, Cant. v. 2. And so, 2 Peter i. 9, 'He that lacketh these things,' that is, useth them not, neglecting to 'add grace to grace,' (as the former words expound that phrase; and it agrees with the like elsewhere used; as, Matt. xxv. 29, he that useth not his talent, is said not to have it, 'To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not,' &c.,) a blindness soon falls on such a man, and he forgetteth all that ever he had, as was opened before. And, indeed, there is no reason that a man should have present comfort of future grace, when he neglects the use of present grace. Isa. lxiv. 7, God complains that there was 'none that stirred up himself;' and for this 'God was wroth.' Whereas otherwise, ver. 5, 'God meets with him that worketh righteousness,' and rejoiceth in him that rejoiceth to work righteousness; God meets such, and rejoiceth with, and draws nigh unto them. But others, that stir not up themselves, God rouseth and stirs them up by terrors: 'He that walketh according to this rule, peace be on him,' Gal. vi. 16; not else. Though comfort is not always the present necessary fruit of righteousness, yet it is never without it.

(4.) Fourthly, in case of some gross sin committed against light, unhumbled for, or proving scandalous, or of old sins long forgotten. I will give instances of each particular:—

[1.] First, for some gross sin committed against light. An instance for this is David; who, though he was a man after God's heart, yet we meet with him often complaining, as one that was frequently in these desertions. Amongst other times, once in the 119th Psalm, verse 25, 28, where 'his soul cleaveth unto the dust,' and is even at death's door, for he says, 'quicken me:' he means it in regard of the sense of God's 'favour, which is better than life;' which also is the meaning of that phrase, that his 'soul did cleave unto the dust,—that is, was brought to the apprehension of death; therefore, Ps. xxii. 15, Christ upon the cross, of whom the psalm is made, cries out that 'God had forsaken him, and brought his soul to the dust of death.' And David says here also, that 'his soul melted, and was dissolved;' even all the powers of it were loosened and failed within him at the sense of God's wrath, even as wax melts before the fire. Ordinarily we find in Scripture no such eminent desertion, but we find the cause of it not far off, if we read on; so here, in the 29th verse, 'Remove from me,' says David, 'the way of lying.' He points

to the sore of his heart, and wherein his grief lay. David, among other corruptions, had a lying spirit. In 1 Sam. xxi. 2, David very roundly telleth two or three lies together, when he fled from Saul and came to Ahimelech, who, fearing to harbour him because of Saul, asked him why he was alone; it being a suspicious thing that he, so great a man, should have no greater train to attend him; and did argue that he fled as a proscribed person, and then it would be dangerous to foster him. To this he answers roundly, 'that the king had commanded him a business,'—there is one lie; and that 'the king had commanded him secresy in it,'—there is another; and because 'my servants should not know it, I have sent them away' to several places,—there is a third. And again, at the 8th verse, 'I have not brought my sword, because the king's business required haste,'—there is a fourth lie. David went on here in a way of lying; they were all made and deliberate lies. Other such like speeches of his—as that, 1 Sam. xxvii. 8, 10, where he told Achish, 'that he went against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Kenites,' ver. 10, whenas he went against 'the Geshurites and the Amalekites,' ver. 8—some excuse, because those nations bordered over against the south of Judah and the south of the Kenites, and so make out a truth in that his speech; but yet the last verse, that says Achish believed David, implies that as he understood it, so David indeed meant it, as if he had gone up against his own countrymen; and then it can no way be excused. These, therefore, being gross sins, sins against light, as of all sins lying must needs be supposed to be, because it is against that truth which riseth up in the mind, and is a sin wherein a man's mind shews art, cunning, and wit, and a sin which, when the truth is discovered, proves exceeding shameful and scandalous; therefore this sin, especially when it had been some while gone on in by him, which therefore he calls a 'way of lying,' lay heavy on him long after. Therefore he entreats God to take the load of it off, 'Remove from me the way of lying.' It was the load hereof which did lie so heavy on him, as it pressed his soul to the dust of death, as he had before complained.

[2.] So for the second particular, in case a sin be not thoroughly humbled for and confessed; or if when we committed it, we had shifts to keep us from thinking it to be sin, or not so heinous, or were doubtful whether it were a sin or no, and so were loath to acknowledge it to be a sin, and to burden ourselves with it in our confessions; but our hearts stood out rather to clear ourselves in it, as it is likely David did in the case of his murder of Uriah. He had done it so cunningly as he thought he could clear himself and wash his hands of it; or it was but the chance of war, says he, that did cut him off—'The sword devoureth one as well as another,'—and so he excuseth it, 2 Sam. xi. 25. God in this case brings him to the rack, Ps. xxxii. It is thought that psalm was made, as well as the 51st Psalm, upon that occasion of this murder; and indeed it may seem so, they are tuned so near together, as might be shewn in many particulars. These sins being known and become scandalous, David was to confess publicly; as in the end he did, when, in making the 51st Psalm, he stood to do penance in a white sheet, that I may so speak. Now David was loath to come to this; that murder being done so cunningly, he could hardly be brought to confess it so much as in secret, much less publicly. God in this case lays his hand so sorely on him that his 'natural moisture was dried up,' as that psalm tells us; for in men troubled in conscience, their trouble of mind casts their bodies often into as great heats as men that are in burning fevers. So, Ps. cii. 3, in the like fit, he says, 'his bones were burnt like a hearth,' and this was without intermis-

sion, 'day and night;' and thus he lay 'roaring,' (so he expresseth his carriage in his torture,) like a malefactor on the rack; though haply he cried out for mercy to God, yet because not with a broken heart, God therefore accounted it but as roaring,—that is, the voice of a beast, as it were, rather than the voice of a man humbled for his sin. And why was David put to the rack thus? He would not confess and humble himself for his sin; 'I was silent, and yet roared,' ver. 3; a still, broken-hearted confession might have saved all this torment. But when in the end 'I said I would confess my sin,' ver. 5, and in his heart he resolved once to lay open all that sin of murder and adultery in the circumstances of them, then God pardoned him, as you know he did; for Nathan coming to him, told him, as soon as but a word of confession began to fall from him, 'that his sins were pardoned.' And yet after that, as appears in the 51st Psalm, God did not yet 'restore comfort' and 'the joy of his salvation' to him, for there he prays for it in the sense of the want of it; not until he had publicly confessed it also, and thoroughly humbled himself; it having caused 'the enemies of God to blaspheme,' God would have a public satisfaction given.

So when the incestuous person had committed that sin, 1 Cor. v. 1, 9, for which, as then he was not humbled, (for afterwards, in 2 Cor. ii. 7, when he was humbled indeed, he bids them comfort him,) yet till that his humiliation was apparent, he bids them to 'deliver such a one to Satan,' to the jailer, to the tormentor, to the prince of darkness, to terrify him and afflict his spirit. Now, the meaning of that delivering him up to Satan was, that he should be solemnly excommunicated; which, when it is performed as it ought to be, 'in the name of the Lord Jesus,' and with the power of the Lord Jesus, then, as the church cuts them off from communion with them, so God from communion with himself, and he withdraws all fellowship with their spirits, as was before declared, and so leaves them alone in darkness and to desertions. And not only so, but 'delivereth them up to Satan,' not with a commission to carry them on to more sin,—for the end propounded by the Apostle was thereby to 'destroy the flesh,' ver. 5, not to nourish it by provoking him to more sin,—but to terrify and afflict his conscience, and to stir up therein the guilt of sin, and terrors for it, which God sanctifies to humble man and to mortify the flesh. And thus when that Corinthian was excommunicated, and given up to him, did Satan deal with him; for, 2 Cor. ii. 7, he was nigh being 'swallowed up of too much sorrow,' and this occasioned by Satan, 'whose devices we are not ignorant of,' says the Apostle, ver. 11. Now, as every ordinance hath a proper peculiar work it is appointed for, an inward effect to accompany it in a man's spirit, so this; and that proper effect and inward working and event of this great ordinance of excommunication is terror, and sorrow, and desertion of spirit, thereby to humble a man; even as it is the proper effect of sacraments to convey comfort and assurance, and to convey the 'seal of the Spirit.' And when this ordinance is neglected or omitted, when yet gross and scandalous sins require it; then a man belonging to God, God himself often works thus, and inflicts this on him without that ordinance. Thus he dealt with David and others after gross sins. God inwardly excommunicates and casts them out of his presence, and from all comforts in his ordinances, although they are not refused by men to come to them; dealing herein as a father that is a public magistrate, with an unruly child, after some great misdemeanour, though he cast him not off, yet he may send him to the jail, to be for example's sake imprisoned: for the jailer to take him, and to clap irons on him, to have him down into the dungeon, where he sees no light, and into the little-ease, where

he is in so strait a condition as he can neither sit, nor stand, nor lie, as Elihu expresseth it, Job xxxvi. 16; he calleth it 'bringing into a strait place,' and 'binding them in fetters and cords of affliction; and then he shews them their transgression, and wherein they have exceeded,' ver. 8, 9.

[3.] Yea, and thirdly, this God doth not only presently after the sins were committed, but sometimes a long while after, and that when they have been often confessed. Yea, and after that God hath pardoned them also in our consciences, as well as in heaven, yet the guilt may return again and leave us in darkness. Thus, Job xiii. 26, for 'the sins of his youth,' which questionless he had humbled himself for, and had assurance of the pardon of, yet God did 'write bitter things against him' for them many years after, and 'made him possess them,' as himself speaks. God gave him over to the jailer, and put him into the little-ease in prison: 'Thou puttest my feet into the stocks,' says he, ver. 27. For as the power of sin and the law of sin is but in part done away in our members, so in our consciences the guilt of sin is likewise but in part done away, in regard of our apprehensions of the pardon of it; and therefore as those lusts we had thought dead, and that they would never have risen again, do sometimes revive and trouble us afresh, coming with new assaults, so in like manner may the guilt of those sins revive which we thought long before had been pardoned; and after the commission of some new act, or forgetfulness of the old, and security about them, God may let them loose upon us afresh, that we shall look upon them, as if they never had been pardoned.

Now the reason of all these particulars, both why gross sins, especially if against light, when not confessed thoroughly, should yet after many years cast us into such fits of desertion, is—

Because therein we rebel against God's Spirit; and that Spirit, *ita nos tractat, ut à nobis tractatur*, doth deal with us as we with him. If you grieve him, he grieves you; if you rebel against him, he fights against you as an enemy. So, Isa. lxiii. 10, 'They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.' Now to sin against light is called rebellion; so Job xxiv. 13. When men go about to extinguish and darken the light of direction which God had set up in their hearts to guide their paths by, God puts out the light of comfort, and so leaves them to darkness. But especially then when our hearts are so full of guile, as we plead that they are no sins, or extenuate them, as David in all likelihood did, Ps. xxxii.; in reference to which he says, in ver. 2 of that psalm, that 'that man is a blessed man in whom is no guile;' and in the 51st Psalm, ver. 6, 'Thou desirest truth in the inward parts.' David had dealt guilefully and deceitfully in that sin. If man keeps a sin under his tongue, and will not be convinced of it, nor bring it forth by confession, God in that case brings him to the rack, as they do traitors, to confess; and if it be that any of our old sins revive and cause these terrors, it is because we began to look on them as past and gone, and thought we needed not go on to humble ourselves any more for them, making account they are so buried as that they will never rise again, whenas the remembrance of them should keep us low and humble us all our days. It is laid to the charge of them in Ezek. xvi. 22, 'that they remembered not that they lay in their blood.' We are apt to think that time wears out the guilt of sins; but to God they are as fresh as if they had been committed yesterday, and therefore nothing wears them out but repentance. Great sins forgiven must not be forgotten.

(5.) Fifthly, in case of a stubborn, stiff spirit, under outward afflictions; when

we will not mend nor stoop to God. This may be part of the case mentioned Isa. lvii., where God alleging the reason why he contended with a poor soul of his, he gives an account of it. Ver. 17, you shall see where the quarrel began: 'For the iniquity of his covetousness I was wroth;' that is, for some inordinate affection, which we call concupiscence; he mentioneth not a gross act of sin committed, so much as some lust harboured: for which God began to be angry, and to shew the effects of that his anger in smiting him, haply with some outward cross first, 'I was wroth and smote him:' and when that did no good, God began to be more angry, and to hide himself, 'I hid my face;' and this he speaks of inward affliction, which he also calleth, ver. 16, 'contending with the soul,' and so far leaving it as that the 'spirit was ready to fail.' It came to inward affliction in the end. And he further intimates the cause of all this, 'He went on frowardly in the way of his heart.' When lighter and outward strokes will not take us off, God leaves and deserts our spirits, and wounds them. And the reason is, for in this case what course else should God take? For either he must give him up to hardness of heart, and leave him to his stubbornness, and so he should have lost his child; but that God is resolved he will not do: 'I will heal him,' saith he, ver. 18. When, therefore, the heart remains stubborn under other strokes, he hath no way left, in his ordinary course and progress in the way of means, but to lay strokes upon his spirit, and wound that. And this yoke is like to break and tame him, if any; for this he cannot bear. Other outward afflictions man's natural spirit, stoutness, and stubbornness, may bear, and hath borne, even in heathen men; they have endured anything rather than be put out of their way—'The spirit of man will sustain its infirmities;' but in this 'the spirit fails in them,' ver. 16. Other afflictions are but particular—but as taking some stars of comfort out of the firmament, when others are still left to shine to them. But when God's countenance is hid, the sun itself, the fountain of light, is darkened, and so a general darkness befalls them. And therefore then the heart is driven to God, and broke off from all things else; and then God delights to restore and to comfort a man again, 'I will restore comfort to him,' ver. 18.

(6.) Sixthly, in case of deserting his truth, and not professing it and appearing for it when he calls us to do it. In this case he left many of the martyrs; many of whom, especially until those in Queen Mary's days, (when with the gospel's increase, and the light of it, God gave more strength also;) and some then also did desert the truth for a while, and then God in respect of comfort deserted them; and then they recovering God's favour again upon repentance, and a new resolution taken to stick to the profession of the truth whatever came of it, that their desertion made them the more bold and resolute. And this was in part Jonah's case, who having a commission sealed him to go to Nineveh with a message from God, he withdrew himself, and went another way; and God in the midst of his security cast him into a whale's belly: and when he was there, God withdraws himself from him, as if he meant never to own him more, insomuch that Jonah says, chap. ii. 4, 'Then I said, I am cast out of thy presence.' And there is this equity in this dealing of God thus with us: that as when we are ashamed of Christ, the punishment fitted to it is, that Christ will be ashamed of us; so when we will not witness for God, there is no reason his Spirit should witness to us. And so, when we seem to evade persecution for the cross of Christ, then it is meet God should meet with us, and take us in hand himself, which is far worse.

(7.) Seventhly, in case of unthankfulness, and too common an esteem had

surance, and light of God's countenance, and of freedom from those rs and doubtings which others are in; which is a sin Christians are apt n into. For as the light of the sun, because it is ordinary, is not re-d, none mind it or look at the sun, but, as he said, when it is in the se; so a continual sunshine of God's favour enjoyed occasioneth but a non esteem of it. And in this case God withdraws those comforts and ance, because they are the greatest and sweetest comforts of all other; which to abuse or not to value, of all other provokes most; therefore in ase God takes them away. For, as Hos. ii. 9, in case of being unthank-outward mercies, God 'took them away,' and restored them not again, hey esteemed them better, and acknowledged whence they had them; so in spiritual assurance, light, and comfort, doth God in like manner

CHAPTER XIII.

The third general head: The ends for which God leaveth his children this darkness.—First, such as are drawn from God, and his fulness, &c.

III. Now let us come to those ends which God may have in this his d with one that fears and obeys him; which are many and holy ones.

1. First, to shew his power and faithfulness, in upholding, raising u healing such a spirit again as hath been long and deadly wounded w ward terrors; which is as great an evidence of his power as any other therefore saith Heman, Ps. lxxxviii. 10, 11, 'Wilt thou shew wonders dead? shall thy faithfulness be declared in destruction?' That is, in r my soul up again to joy and comfort, which is as much as to raise up man; nay more, as much as to raise up a soul already in hell; for the terrors, says he, that destroy them do in like manner seize on me. In i. 19, it is said, that the exceeding greatness of God's power was s raising Christ from death to life; and wherein lay principally the demo tion of that power? Not simply in raising his body up again; that more than he did to others. But in Acts ii. 24, the power is said to be in this, that he having 'loosed the pains of death, wherewith it was sible he should be held, he was raised up again.' His soul was heav death with terrors: and those pains in themselves were deadly, thou to him, in that he being God as well as man, it was impossible for sink under them. Now therefore to raise up and glorify that his sou was so bruised, wounded, and pierced through and through, herein l wonder; and such a wonder God shewed in recovering Heman. A shew the greatness of this work, let us consider a little the depth and ness of this kind of distress. It is compared to the 'bruising of a which when it is bruised, who can make it stand upright again? It is 'the wounding of the spirit,' Prov. xxviii.; which no creature knows l come at to heal, none but God, who is the Father of spirits, who made and knows how to mend them. It is not only called the sickness spirit,—as Isa. xxxiii. 24, where the want of the assurance of the forgi of sins makes poor souls to say, 'I am sick;' which to heal is ma prerogative of 'the Sun of righteousness, arising with healing in his Mal. iv. 2,—but also it is called 'death and destruction;' for so in tha Psalm, Heman calls that distress that he was in. And the reason is, 'favour is our life,' by which we live and are upheld; which therefore withdrawn, the soul is ready to fail and faint, and to come to nothin sink into destruction, Isa. lvii. 16. And again, the pains of those are more violent, and more powerful to hold us under, than are the pa death; the wounds of the guilt of sin being as deadly, and as strong, lusts of the power of it: and it requires as great a power to dissol

scatter them. For all the strength that the law and God's justice hath, sin also hath to back it; 'for the strength of sin is the law,' 1 Cor. xv. 56.

2. Secondly, as to know the power of Christ's resurrection, 'so the fellowship of his sufferings;' that thereby the soul may be made more 'conformable to him,' as it is, Phil. iii. 10. As there are the sufferings *for Christ*, so the sufferings *of Christ*: and God makes his partakers of both—persecutions without, and terrors within; with which Christ's soul was filled then whenas the text says, 'He was heard in what he feared;' and 'his soul was heavy to death;' and 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' and so, Isa. liii., 'it pleased God to bruise and wound him.' Now then, to conform us to his image, we that are his brethren, and are the persons guilty, must suffer somewhat in spirit as well as he, and have a portion therein also. And therefore, as Christ did suffer both inwardly and outwardly, so do many of his members: 'If you have suffered with him, ye shall also be glorified with him.' The sons of Zebedee would have been glorified in Christ's kingdom more than the rest of the apostles; but says Christ, Matt. xx. 22, 'Are ye able to drink of the cup whereof I shall drink?'—he means that cup delivered to him at his crucifying; 'Let this cup pass,' the bitter cup of God's anger,—'and are ye able to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?' namely, outward afflictions and persecutions for the name of God; which are called baptisms, because they set God's mark on us that we are God's, as baptism doth seal to us that we are his; and because then the church owns us, and takes notice of us as sincere, when we have believed and suffered, as at baptism the church receives us. And of this baptism Christ speaks in the present tense, because that he was already baptized with outward persecutions; but the cup, which was inward affliction of his spirit, this he was to drink of at his agony—'which I *shall* drink of,' in the future; which cup cast him into that sweat, ere he came to the bottom. This, though no creature was able to drink off to the bottom, yet taste they might; and he tells them they should, ver. 23, 'Ye shall drink of it,' &c., that is, taste of inward affliction and desertion, as well as of outward persecution,—terrors within and without,—and all to make us conformable to him, and so come to know in part what he endured for us.

3. Thirdly, to put the greater difference between the estate of God's children here, and that hereafter in heaven; to which very purpose is that speech of the Apostle, 2 Cor. v. 7, that here 'we walk by faith, not by sight.' He had said before, that the estate of believers in this life is an estate of 'absence from the Lord,' wherein we want his presence, and so enjoy not the sight of him; and therefore are to exercise faith the more, which is peculiar to this estate, and a grace given of purpose for us to walk by, whilst we live here. And though sometimes we have some light, and glimpses of him and his presence, yet we walk not by sight always; for we walk by faith, not by sight. We shall have enough of the sight of God hereafter, when 'we shall see him, as we are seen, face to face,' and be 'evermore with the Lord,' 'when in his light we shall see light, and be satisfied with his image.' We may therefore be content to want it here sometimes. You may well endure over-cloudings here, and sometimes that all sight should be taken away; for in the world to come there will not be one cloud to all eternity. 'Your inheritance is light,' Col. i. 12, 13. Light is your portion, but now is the seed-time; and 'light is sown,' Ps. xcvii. 11, 'for the righteous.' You must be content to let it lie under-ground; the longer it doth so, the greater crop and harvest will come up in the end. You must endure the vicissitude of

day and night here, 'sorrow overnight, and joy in the morning;' for here after you shall have continual day and no night. This difference there is put between earth and heaven, to make heaven sweeter, and to exercise faith the estate in heaven is as a state of perfect and continual health; which that we may prize, we are ever and anon sick here, and qualms come over our consciences, fears our sins are not forgiven; but when we come thither, 'The inhabitants there shall be no more sick, but their sins shall be forgiven them,' Isa. xxxiii. 24.

4. The fourth end is, to let us see whence spiritual comforts and refreshings come: that God alone keeps the keys of that cupboard, and alone dispenseth them how and when he pleaseth. That we may know (as it is Isa. xlv. 6, 7) that it is 'the Lord that formed the light and creates darkness, evil and peace;' and that as 'affliction riseth not out of the dust,' as Job speaks, so nor comfort out of our hearts. Whereas if continually we enjoyed comfort, we should be apt so to think. God will let us see that our hearts are nothing but darkness; and that to cause any spiritual comfort is as much as to create light at first: therefore he says, 'I create the fruit of the lips; Peace,' Isa. lvii. 19, and that he it is that doth 'command light to shine into our hearts, who commanded light at first to shine out of darkness,' 2 Cor. iv. 6; which can no way more fully be manifested than by withdrawing that light sometimes, and leaving us to darkness. As why doth he sometimes assist us in prayer, and fill the sails, and again at some times leaves our heart empty? Is it not that we may learn that lesson, Rom. viii. 26, that it is 'the Spirit that helpeth our infirmities,' and that we of ourselves 'know not what nor how to ask?' Which lesson, although he sometimes straitens us, yet we are difficult in learning, nor are easily brought to acknowledge our dependence on him for his assistance. In like manner, for the same end doth he sometimes hide, and then again sometimes reveal himself, to shew that he is the immediate fountain of comfort,—'The God of all comforts,' 2 Cor. i. 3,—that so we might know whom to thank, whom to depend on, whom to go to for comfort: it being as difficult a thing for us to go out of ourselves, and from the creatures, for comfort, to God alone, as to go out of ourselves to Christ alone for righteousness. Hereby also we see that though we have never so many outward comforts, that yet the comforts of our spirits do depend on God alone; for if he in the midst of them withdraw himself, they all prove but miserable comforters.

CHAPTER XIV.

A second sort of ends for the trial and discovery of graces; especially of faith.

5. OTHER ends God hath, to make trial of our graces and a discovery of them. The same end that God had in leading his people through 'the great wilderness, where no water was,' where 'scorpions stung them,' Deut. viii. 16, which was to prove them, &c.; the same ends hath God in suffering his people to go through this desert, barrenness, and darkness, where no light is, and where terrors of the law do sting them,—for all those his dealings then were types of God's dealings with his people now,—even to prove them, and to make trial of their hearts. For the same ends as he left Hezekiah to the power of sin in the point of sanctification,—namely, 'to know what was in his heart,'—doth he also leave others of his children to the guilt of sin in the point of justification, to discover also what is in their hearts. This is conceived to have been his end in deserting Job, to shew what strong patience, unconquered faith was in him. There be many gracious dispositions which actually have not opportunity to discover themselves but in case of this kind of desertion. Some of those which are the highest acts of grace and purest fruits of it, and which are the surest evidences of the truth of grace, would never appear but in case of such desertion. For instance, then it is known whether a man love God for himself, and for those excellences of wisdom, holiness, and goodness that are in him, when yet he knows not whether he himself shall be ever the better for them, yea or no. Then also it is manifested to be pure, sincere, and unfeigned obedience. Then it is seen his repentance is true, when he repents not of it, then when he is out of hopes of any reward for it. Then it is seen his sorrow is godly sorrow, when, though the sentence of condemnation is read to him in his own apprehension and conscience, and he verily thinks he is taking his leave of God for ever, and going to execution, yet he can down upon his knees, and ask him forgiveness, and mourneth that ever he wronged him; is angry and displeased with himself that a God so good, so just, should have so just cause to be angry and displeased with him; and he finds that he could have some rest and contentment that God is glorified upon one who hath so much dishonoured him. Such dispositions as these would never see the light, if it were not for this darkness. But as *natura vexata prodit seipsam;* nature, when conclusions are tried upon it, and it is put out of its course, then it discovers itself, (even as anger discovers itself when a man is vexed,) as, if you would know the properties that are in herbs, you must try conclusions with them; so also here doth God with a man's graces, and then they discover their most occult and hidden properties.

It were needless to go over all particular graces; I will but more distinctly instance in that glorious grace of *faith*. Which in this trial deserves more than all graces else, and though in all the varieties of conditions we pass through it stands us in stead, yet in desertions it alone doth wonders;

standing like Samson, encountering and conquering alone, when there is none to help. Because likewise, it is that grace which is called for in the text, 'Let him trust in the name of the Lord,' as being that grace which God principally tries, to discover the truth, and magnify the power thereof in such desertions.

(1.) First, this is certain, there is no grace God tries more than this grace of faith. Therefore, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7, 'Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, being tried in the fire, might be found to glory, praise, and honour;' that is, both to the honour of God who is believed in, and also of faith itself, which is the most glorious grace a Christian hath; which God loves to try, to that end the glory of it may appear. In the 5th verse he having said, that 'we are kept by the power of God to salvation,' if any now should ask, Wherein is that power of keeping us most shewn? he answers, In and through faith. 'Ye are kept by the power of God through faith.' And if you ask, When and wherein is the power of God through faith seen most? he instanceth in 'manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith,' &c.

Now then, as of all graces God would have faith tried; so—

(2.) Of all temptations none try it more than desertion of God's countenance, this of darkness and of terrors. Other temptations strike but obliquely at faith, but these lay direct battery to our faith, for they strike at that which is the immediate aim and object of it; namely, that God is a man's God. These speak the direct contrary to what faith endeavours to apprehend, and that directly, and not by consequence only. Again, other temptations are easily borne and answered, whilst the assurance of God's favour remains unshaken. It answers them all, and shakes them off, as he the viper off his hand; but when that shall begin to be questioned, as in this case it is, who is able to stand? And what is able to strengthen a man then but the power of faith? As Solomon says of the spirit of a man, that it will bear all kinds of infirmities, if itself be whole; but if it be wounded, who can bear it?—so I say of assurance: if it be weakened and battered, the very foundations thereby are shaken; a man's freehold touched, the root struck. Now, in such a case, it is faith's peculiar office to stand a man in stead, when nothing else can. Therefore he says, 'Let him trust,' &c., because it helps thus at this dead lift.

(3.) Again, thirdly, in these conflicts of faith with desertions, consisteth the height of our Christian warfare. This is the highest pitched battle, the greatest, and, as it were, the last brunt, upon which all is either won or lost; for in these a man encounters with God himself, apprehended as an enemy. God called out Job to try him by fighting a single combat with Satan, and he became, as I may so say, too hard for Satan alone; and God joins against him also. Now then, to bear the brunt and shock of his wrath, and yet to stand upon a man's feet; this, to the utmost, argueth the strength of faith. Hos. xii. 3, it is said of Jacob that 'by strength he had power with God;' it argued strength indeed: and this is done by faith, by the power whereof, God's power rather supporting it, a man relies on God, when all his dealings would argue he had forsaken a man; that though God put on never so angry a countenance, look never so sternly, yet faith is not dashed out of countenance, but can read love in his angry looks, and trust God beyond what he sees, it being the 'evidence of things not seen.' Then, faith goes wholly out of itself, as seeing nothing in itself but barely a capacity of mercy and plenteous redemption, which it knows to be in God. This faith is a

le of miracles, for it is founded, as the earth, upon mere nothing in itself, et bears the weight and stress of sins, devil, yea, of God himself. And ı the faith ye are converted by, in believing then 'on him that justifies ıgodly,' Rom. iv. 5; and that which we must live by when all comforts and this is that faith which must stand you in stead at death, when ing of fears comes and besiegeth you: and this is the faith 'that is to ır and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.'

CHAPTER XV.

Six ends more, for the increasing of several graces, and destroying corruptions.

6. SIXTHLY, as it makes for the trial and discovery of graces, so it is a means sanctified to increase them, and to eat out corruptions:—

(1.) First, it is a means to *destroy the flesh*. The incestuous Corinthian was to be delivered to Satan,—that is, to be terrified,—to destroy the flesh. As corrosives eat out dead flesh, so these terrors the dead corruptions; and the reviving of the guilt of old sins doth kill the seeds of those that remain in the heart. For if an outward affliction, which crosseth but the satisfaction of a lust, is a means sanctified by God to kill a lust; then much more the inward terror which the conscience feels, and which ariseth immediately from the guilt of a sin, must needs be a means much more.

(2.) Secondly, it is a means to *humble*. So, Deut. viii. 16, the end of the biting of the Israelites by scorpions—which were the types of these stings and terrors—was, as to prove, so to humble them; and for this end was that buffeting by Satan we have so often mentioned, 2 Cor. xii. 7, to keep down being exalted above measure. So also, 1 Pet. v. 6, 'Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God;' and if in any other affliction his mighty hand lays hardest on, surely in these.

(3.) Thirdly, it is a means to bring you in *more assurance* and establishment. 1 Pet. v. 10, 'The God of all grace, after you have suffered a while, stablish and strengthen you.' He knew they could not be settled till they had suffered in this or some other kind. The tree roots itself the more, the more it is shaken. 'Comforts abound the more that sufferings do abound.' That light is clearest and strongest that ariseth out of darkness, because God creates it. Those things which men doubt of most, God gives the greatest evidence of in the end.

(4.) Fourthly, it trains you up to *fear* God more, and to *obey* him. Therefore, in the text, these are added as the concomitant dispositions of the soul in such a case. For of all other, these of fearing God and obeying him do most eminently and sensibly appear in that estate: Heb. v. 8, 'Christ himself learned obedience by what he suffered.' The yoke tames the wanton wildness in beasts, and makes them serviceable, breaks them; and so do these the stubbornness of a man's spirit.

(5.) Fifthly, to set believers' hearts a-work to *pray* more and more earnestly. So the Apostle's buffetings, 2 Cor. xii., made him pray thrice,—that is, often. So Christ, Luke xxii. 44, 'being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly;' and being in fear, he did lift up strong cries, Heb. v. 7. So Heman, by reason of his terrors, was a man much in prayers, Ps. lxxxviii. 1, 'I have cried day and night before thee.' Christians that enjoy not communion with God, yet if they think they have not lost him, they are secure and lazy in prayers; but if they apprehend once that their 'beloved is gone,'

or that they are in danger to lose him, then they will seek him all the world over but they will find him, Cant. v. 6–8; and make hue and cry after him, as the church did there.

(6.) Sixthly, it causeth them to *prize the light of God's countenance the more* when they again obtain it, and so set a higher price upon it, and to endeavour by close walking with God, as children of light, to keep it; to prize it 'more than corn and oil.' Cant. iii. 2, 'she loseth him;' but at the 4th verse 'she finds him again,' and then 'she holds him,' and will not let him go.

PART II.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light?—ISA. L. 10.

USE I.

IF those that fear God and obey him are exposed to such a condition as hath been described; then, 'Who is among you that feareth not the Lord, nor obeys the voice of his servants?' You that live in known sins, and in omission of known duties, which God's servants, your ministers, tell you you ought to perform; that pray not with your families; who make not conscience of your speeches nor dealings, &c.,—'where shall you appear, if the righteous be thus scarcely saved?' If they whom God hath loved with a love as great and unchangeable as himself, yet suffer his terrors here; what shall you do whom he hath set himself to hate, and to shew the power of his wrath upon, without repentance? 'If these things be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry?' Luke xxiii. 31, which is fitted for wrath and the fire, even as 'stubble fully dry,' Nahum i. 10, as the prophet speaketh. If such an estate of darkness and horror befall them that are children of light, whose inheritance is light, Col. i. 12; then what is reserved for you that are darkness, and 'love darkness more than light?' And if this befalls them for not stirring up the grace which they already have; what to you that are utterly devoid of it; and not only so, but despise and scoff it? If this befalls them for not humbling themselves for old sins, though long since committed; what will befall you for going on to add new to the old with greediness? If to them for neglecting the opportunities of drawing nigher to God; what to you for neglecting the offer of grace, and trampling under foot the blood of Christ? All you that think there is no hell, or if there be, that it is not so dark as it is usually painted, look upon Heman ready to run distracted through terrors, and to give up the ghost every moment, Psalm lxxxviii., when yet his body was strong and outward estate whole. Look upon David lying upon the wheel, and the Spirit of God 'breaking his bones,' Psalm li., whenas otherwise, he being a king, had all outward things at will. Look upon holy Job, chap. vi., 'Oh that my grief were weighed! it is heavier than the sand; and my words are swallowed up;'—that is, I am not able to express and utter my grief;—'the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison thereof drinketh up my spirit; the terrors of God do set themselves in battle array against me,' ver. 4. Insomuch, that at the 8th verse he wisheth 'God would cut him off;' and, 'Is my strength the strength of stones,' says he. 'or my flesh brass,' as he complains, that he should be able to hold out against such fierce encounters? My brethren, God's people find

pains beyond those of the stone, gout, and toothache; the falling of God's wrath on the conscience is more than the dropping a little scalding rheum on a tooth; and yet these, which Job and David felt, are but a taste of that cup which you that obey not must drink off to the bottom; and it is eternity to the bottom. Psalm lxxv. 8, 'There is a cup in the hand of the Lord, and it is full of mixture,'—that is, all the bitter ingredients in the world are in it, the quintessence of evils are strained into it; and here indeed God 'pours out of the same,' as it follows there,—that is, in this life some few sprinklings of it fall from the top of the cup, which his own do taste and drink of; but the bottom, 'the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall drink, and wring them out,'—that is, leave none behind; but the vials of it, which will never be emptied, shall be poured forth, even to the utmost drop. And if God's people do begin to taste of it,—as Christ himself did, it 'could not pass him,' and Zebedee's sons were to pledge him, as was observed,—then, as God says by Jeremiah, chap. xxv. 27–29, 'If my people have drunk of it,' and begun to you, 'and I have brought evil upon the city that is called by my name; then certainly you shall drink of it, and be drunk, and spue, and fall and never rise again.' If God's people be thus shut up in darkness, what darkness is reserved for you? Even as Jude says, ver. 13, 'blackness of darkness;' 'darkness where is weeping and gnashing of teeth,' Matt. xxii. 13. Blackness of darkness, because there is not a cranny of light, nor one beam of comfort that shines in to all eternity. And this is not for a moment, or a few years, but for ever. You 'that live many days in pleasure here, and rejoice in them all; remember the days of darkness, for they are many,' says Solomon, Eccles. xi. 8. Many indeed! Days! An eternal night that shall know no end, which no day shall follow.

USE II.

Who is among you that fears the Lord and is translated out of the state of darkness, and yet never was in this darkness of desertion which I have described unto you? You that have been free from those terrors of conscience, which are beyond all the miseries the world hath,—for as the joy of the Holy Ghost is unspeakable and glorious, so these terrors are unutterable and unsupportably grievous,—which yet souls that fear God and have obeyed him more than you, have been made the anvils of; you that have been dandled, cockered, and fed with sweetmeats, had into the wine cellar, and have had all the Trinity to sup with you, John xiv. 23, Rev. iii. 20, when others have eaten 'gall and wormwood,' as it is, Lam. iii. 19; and likewise you who, though you enjoy not much ravishing joy, and 'peace which passeth understanding,' yet, 'being justified by faith, you have' a solid 'peace with God,' Rom. v. 1; and so walk in freedom of spirit, in the use of God's ordinances, and in the performance of holy duties;—let me out of this doctrine give all such this great instruction: To take notice that such kind of troubles there are that do befall God's people beyond what they have experience of. Many there are that think not so; Job's friends did not, and therefore censured him. And this is a necessary instruction:—

1. For this very knowledge of it doth prepare men for such a condition, if it should befall them; and therefore, beforehand to prepare them he wrote to, for afflictions, the Apostle bids them 'not think it strange concerning the fiery trial,' 1 Pet. iv. 12. For if they be strange to any, then if they befall them at any time, they are the more grievous. As if some strange disease befall a man which he had never heard of before, no physician hath skill in,

it amazeth a man, and makes him desperate; but if he hath heard that such and such have had it, as well as himself, and have been recovered, this something helps to assuage the bitterness of it to him. Job's trial was a strange trial to his friends, and therefore you see how unskilfully they go about to heal it, and so left the sore worse than they found it. So that to prepare you for it, it is good to take notice that such a condition there is. In like manner also, in 1 Cor. x. 13, for the same end, the Apostle says of other kind of trials, that 'nothing had befallen them but what is common to man.' There is a great relief in that, that it is common, and others have been in the like.

2. Secondly, also, take notice of it, that you may be kept more in dependence upon God, and that you may fear him more whilst you live in this world. Men that know not any afflictions in this life beyond what they see with their eyes and feel in the outward man, nothing beyond loss of friends and credit, these do often fear God less, though truly; and when they come to part with any of these for God, are less willing,—as when they must endure a cross rather than sin, are apter to choose sin rather than affliction,* as Job says,—but when they shall hear and know that God's wrath is beyond Pharaoh's wrath, as Moses knew it, who yet in the vast apprehension of the greatness of it, cries out, Ps. xc., 'Who hath known the power of thy wrath?' then they will obey God and fear him more than they would all the kings of the earth, as Moses did; 'not fearing the wrath of Pharaoh,' Heb. xi. 27. When men enjoy a confluence of all carnal worldly comforts, and think their mountain strong, well built, with wife, children, about them, and riches, health, and honours, they think they are then more out of God's danger than other men, and are apt to say, 'Soul, thou hast goods for many years;' but know, that God, without taking either thy goods away or thy soul away, can in this life put thy spirit into such a condition of darkness as thou wouldest give all the world to have a moment's ease, when all other comforts shall be to thee but as the white of an egg, as Job says. As he hath joys the world gives not, so he hath afflictions the world inflicts not. Therefore fear him more than the loss of all, obey him rather than to keep all; for God can meet with thee in the midst of all: so he met with David, though a king, and then all his wives and kingdom could not comfort him, till God would 'heal the bones that he had broken.'

3. Thirdly, take notice there are such troubles, and learn not to censure others when they are in this condition. Thou walkest in the light, and thou seest another in the dungeon; he may be dearer to God than thou. It was Job's friends' fault, who, having not had experience of such a condition in themselves, concluded that he was a hypocrite. If you thus judge, then, as Asaph says, 'you condemn the generation of the just,' Ps. lxxiii. 13, 14. And herein Satan also is gratified, the strict ways of grace scandalised. If God use his children thus, 'Curse God and die,' says Job's wife; and so the foolish men and women of this world.

4. Fourthly, 'pass your sojourning here in fear, and serve him with fear,' 1 Pet. i. 17; for even 'our God is a consuming fire,' Heb. xii. 29. Keep the heart in awe with the knowledge of such an estate. This kept Job in awe, and made him so strict a man all his days. Read the thirty-first chapter throughout, and you shall see what a righteous man he was, and then see the reason of all: ver. 23, 'Destruction from the Lord was a terror

* In the original edition it is 'affliction rather than sin.' The sense seems to require the change which I have ventured to make. Besides, this is really what Job says, chap. xxxvi. 21.—ED.

to me. And to the same purpose also, chap. iii. 25, 26, he says that 'he had always feared that which now had befallen him,' whereof the distress of his spirit was the greatest evil; this he feared might befall him when he had most assurance.

5. Lastly, be thankful that God spares thee. Haply thy body is weak; and he knows that thou art but flesh, and so stirs not up all his wrath: if he should fall on thee as on others, it would destroy thee. But consider that thou hadst a stone in thy heart as well as any other. God hath cured it by gentle draughts, and so dissolved it and carried it away; whenas he hath cut others, and bound them, and put them to much pain in taking of it out. Oh, be thankful! You that are healthful and have strong bodies, are you not thankful when you see others sick, and lie bedrid, roaring of the stone, toothache, gout, whereof you are free? And ought you not to be much more for the healthfulness of your spirits, (cheerfulness being the marrow of them,) whenas others are sick, as the expression is, Isa. xxxiii. 24, for want of assurance that their sins are forgiven? Others roar all day as on a rack, and are distressed almost out of their wits, and even themselves are a burden to themselves. Oh, be thankful that it is not so with you!

USE III.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and hath been in darkness, but now is out of that eclipse, and walks in the light again? You who have been in the dungeon, and have been set free again; who have had the wounds of your spirit healed, your souls raised from the nethermost hell, when they 'drew nigh to the grave, and have found a ransom,' Job xxxiii.; learn your duty also:—

1. First, to be thankful to God and Jesus Christ, and to love the more; for you know and have tasted what he did for you. You know how bitter a few sips of the cup was which he drank off and took down, and therefore must needs love him more. You also have more experience of God's power and faithfulness, and what a miracle God hath wrought in raising you up again: he hath 'shewn you wonders among the dead,' as Heman speaks; be thankful. Thus David, in Ps. cxvi. 3, 4, compared with ver. 1, 'I love the Lord.' And why? 'The sorrows of death compassed me, the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow; I was brought low, and he helped me.'

2. Secondly, learn to pity others in that condition. Who can do it better than you, that have experience of the like? If you hear of any soul in distress, it is expected of you to pray for him more than of another. Christ learned to pity us in all our infirmities the more, by bearing our infirmities himself, Heb. iv. 15. To that end God raised you up, that you might be able to comfort others with 'the comforts you have received,' 2 Cor. i. 4, and might pray for them. Therefore, Isa. lvii. 18, when any poor soul is smitten, God, as it is there said, is moved to restore him again, for his mourners' sakes as well as his own.

3. Thirdly, declare what God hath done for you. You have been in hell: give warning to others from coming there. 'We, knowing the terror of the Lord, persuade men.' If the rich man had come from hell, what stories would he have told to have scared all his brethren! Tell you the like. You have seen 'the wonders of God in the deep;' now you are ashore, tell men of the rocks, and shelves, and storms they are like to meet with in such and such courses, of uncleanness, worldliness, &c. David says, when he would

have once his bones that were broken healed again, that 'then he would teach sinners God's ways,' Ps. li.

4. Fourthly, take heed of what may prove the fuel of such a condition. The devil may come and cast you into your old fits if he find the same materials to work upon, such as gross sins, acts of uncleanness, lying, unjust dealing, &c. You know what brought David to his broken bones. And likewise take heed of performing duties formally, coldly, and in hypocrisy, and of resting in them; which are but as a hollow tooth (as Solomon speaks, Prov. xxv. 19) that is broken, better out of the head than in; these may cause the toothache again. Take heed of sinning against light; if the devil found no such things in you, he should not trouble you. So also, get small straggling doubts answered, let them not lie neglected; they may come in together one day and make an army; though, several and apart, as they now rise in your consciences scattered, you can despise and neglect them.

USE IV.

The fourth and main use, to such as fear God and walk in darkness.

Then, who is among you walking in darkness, that yet fears to offend God as much as hell, and endeavoureth and desires to obey him in all things as much as to go to heaven? Such, when they find God withdraw, and their hearts left comfortless, their spirits dead and hard, do call God's love and their own estates into question; especially if they were in the sunshine before, but now sit 'in the valley of the shadow of death.' If dandled in God's lap before and kissed, now to be lashed with terrors and his sharpest rods, and on the tenderest place, the conscience; to have their songs in the night turned into writing bitter things against them; how bitter is it to them! Once, they say, they could never come to the throne of grace but their hearts were welcomed, their heads stroked, and they went seldom away without a 'white stone,' an earnest-penny put into their hands; but now God is a terror to them, and when they arise from prayer or the like duty, their hearts condemn them more than when they began. Once they never looked to heaven but they had a smile; now they may cry day and night and not get a good look from him. Once, say they, they never hoist up sail to any duty, but they had a fair and good wind, God went along with them; but now they have both wind and tide, God and the deadness of their own hearts, against them. In a word, God is gone, light is gone: God answers them neither by vision nor by prophets; neither in praying nor in hearing; and therefore hath forsaken them, cast them off, yea, will never be merciful. Oh, woe to us, say they, we are undone!

You err, poor souls, *not knowing the Scriptures*, and the manner of your God, and of his dealings with his people, to think that his mind is changed when his countenance is, and so to run away from him, as Jacob did from Laban; to think he hath cast you off, when he is but 'returning to his place,' that you may 'seek him more earnestly,' Hos. v. 15. Like children, when their mother is gone aside a little, you fall a-crying as if you were undone. So it is that you are always in the extremes: if he shines on you, then 'your mountain shall never be removed;' if he hides his face, then 'he will never be merciful.' This, as it is a fond and childish fault, so it is beastly and brutish also, thus to judge. I term it so because you are led therein by sense, and, like beasts, believe nothing but what you feel and see, and measure God's love by his looks and outward carriage; which when Asaph did in other afflictions, as you in this, he cries out he was 'ignorant, and as

a beast,' Ps. lxxiii. 22. What! will you trust God no further than you see him? It will shame you one day to think what a great deal of trouble your childishness put the Spirit of God unto. As what trouble is it to a wise man, to have a fond and foolish wife, who if he be but abroad, and about necessary business, haply for her maintenance, yet then she complains he regards her not, but leaves her; if he chides her for any fault, then she says he hates her, and is so much distempered by it as a whole day's kindness cannot quiet her again? Thus deal you with God, and though he hath given you never so many fair and clear evidences of his love, and these never so often reiterated and renewed, yet still you are jealous, never quiet, always doubting, questioning all upon the least frown; that either God must undo you, by letting you go on in your sinful dispositions, without ever rebuking of you, or else lose the acknowledgment of all his love formerly shewn, and have it called in question by your peevish, jealous misconstructions, upon every small expression of his anger towards you. Some of you that are less troubled, and thus 'wanton against Christ,' I would chide out of it.

But you that are more deeply and lastingly distressed, I pity you, I blame you not for being troubled; for when 'he hides his face, the creatures all are troubled,' Ps. civ. 29. God would have you lay it to heart when he is angry, Isa. lvii. 17. God there took it ill that 'when he smote him, he went on stubbornly.' If you should not thus lay it to heart, it were a sign you had no grace; that you made not him your portion, if you could bear his absence and not mourn. Carnal men, having other comforts, can bear the want and absence of him well enough; but not you, that have made him your portion, and your exceeding great reward. But yet though you are to lay it to heart, so as to mourn under it; yet not to be discouraged, to call all into question. For though you change, yet not God, Mal. iii. 6, James i. 7; nor his love, for his love is himself, 1 John iv. 8–10. We may change in our apprehensions and opinions, and God's outward carriages and dispensations may be changed towards us, but not his rooted love. We are not the same to-day that yesterday we were; but 'Christ is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever,' Heb. xiii. 8. To say that he hath cast you off because he hath hid his face, is a fallacy fetched out of the devil's topics, and injurious to him; for, Isa. liv. 8, 'In a little wrath have I hid my face for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I remember thee.' I have but 'hid my face,' not cast thee out of mind; and though in 'anger,' yet but a 'little' anger; and not long neither, but 'for a moment.' And all that while I am not unmindful of thee, 'I remember thee,' &c.; and this with 'kindness from everlasting to everlasting.' When the sun is eclipsed, (which eclipse is rather of the earth than of the sun, which shines as it did,) foolish people think it will never recover light, but wise men know it will.

Obj.—But you will say, If this desertion were but for a moment, it were something; but mine hath been for many years.

Ans.—How many years? This life is but a moment; and God hath eternity of time to shew his love in; time enough to make amends for a few frowns; 'everlasting kindnesses.' Remember the text says, one that fears God may *walk* in darkness; not for a step or two, but many wearisome turns in it. Heman was afflicted from his youth; David so long, that, Ps. lxxvii., he thought God had forgotten mercy. And doth his promise fail for ever? Remember what he said in another case, Luke xviii. 8, that though he bears long, yet he comes speedily; that is, though long in our eyes, yet speedily in his own, who hath all time before him, and knows how much time is behind to be spent in embraces with you.

Obj.—Yea, but you will say, It is not only hiding his face; but I suffer terrors: he is wroth; he is turned enemy; he fights against me; and therefore I am a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction.

Ans.—So it was with Job, chap. xiii. 24, 'Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?' So Isa. lxiii. 10; Ps. lxxxviii. 16. All these are but the effects of a temporal wrath. There is a wide difference between a child *under* wrath, and a child *of* wrath. Thou mayest be a child under wrath, when not a child of wrath. God, as he may afflict you in your estates and bodies, so your spirits, as a father; for, Heb. xii. 9. he is 'the Father of spirits.'

TEN DIRECTIONS

FOR THOSE WHO ARE MORE DEEPLY TROUBLED; AND MEANS TO BE USED HOW TO RECOVER LIGHT AND COMFORT.

FOR their sakes who are thus more deeply troubled, I will prescribe some *directions* how they are to behave themselves in such a condition, so as to come more comfortably and the more speedily out of it. For it is in these long and great sicknesses of the soul as in those of the body; men are kept the longer in them, and under them, for want of right directions and prescriptions, as we see in long agues and fevers, and the like diseases.

DIRECTION I.

First, Take heed of rash, desperate, impatient, and unbelieving speeches and wishes; such you will be forced to recall again with sorrow. As David, when he was in fears, uttered a desperate speech, namely, that Samuel's prophecy concerning him, and message to him from God, that he should be king, would prove false; and he says not only, that 'one day he should perish by the hand of Saul,' 1 Sam. xxvii. 1;—the ground of which speech was, that he finding himself every day in some danger or other of his life, and so, though God had preserved him again and again, yet he thought that some of those many arrows which were shot against him so continually, and which still so narrowly missed him, might, at one time or other, hit and speed him, it were a wonder else;—but he says further, Ps. cxvi. 11, 'I said in my haste, that all men are liars,' the prophet Samuel and all; that it was but a promise of a vain man. But he soon recalls himself, and adds, 'I said this in my haste.' So likewise, Ps. xxxi. 22, 'I said in my haste, I am cut off.' They were rash speeches, as he confesses, spoken in haste. Even so doth many a poor soul break forth and say, after they have had strong hopes, at first conversion, that a kingdom is theirs, that heaven is theirs, and that it is reserved for them; and they kept for it also through the power of God: yet the devil being let loose to persecute them, as Saul did him, and God hiding his face, and the arrows of the Almighty flying thick about their ears, the sorrows of hell encompassing them, and well-nigh every moment cutting them off; they, although upheld again and again, yet are apt to say that, one day or other, they shall in all likelihood be cut off by God's hand, swallowed up of Satan, and everlastingly destroyed. And when they are told of the hopes they had at their first conversion, and the promises that are made to them, they are apt to say that their graces by which they should now claim those promises are all a lie, false and counterfeit, and but in hypocrisy. This they say in their haste too often. So at another time, when David was in doubt about that other promise of an eternal kingdom, made to him in Ps. lxxvii., he says, 'God will never be merciful.' What a desperate weak speech was this, that what a man sees not at present, he should conclude

would never be! But he acknowledged his error in it: 'It was my infirmity,' ver. 10, thus to speak. So the church, Lam. iii. 17–19: 'I said, My hope is perished from the Lord.' What a desperate speech was this! But she eats her words again with grief, ver. 21, 'This I recall to mind, therefore have I hope.' Job, though for a while, at the beginning of the storm, he was somewhat calm and quiet in his spirit, and it was his commendation; and therefore, in chap. i. 22, it is said that 'in all this'—that is, so long and thitherto—'he had not charged God foolishly:' but this held but to the first and second chapter, for when he began to be wet to the skin once, and the drops of God's wrath began to soak into his soul, then he falls a-roaring, chap. iii., and 'curseth the day of his birth;' and, chap. vi. 8, 9, wisheth God would cut him off; and, chap. vii. 15, says, 'his soul did choose strangling rather than life.' For which speeches God in the end steps out, as it were, from behind the hangings, overhearing him, taking him up for them: chap. xxxviii. 2, 'Who is this,' says he, 'that talks thus?' How now?

But, good souls, you that are in trouble; oh, take heed of such impatient wishes or speeches as these or the like, that all which you have had is but in hypocrisy; and, Oh that God would cut me off! that I were in hell, and knew the worst! Take heed, I say. When a man is sick and raves, whereas otherwise the physician and those that stand about him would in pity use him gently, they are forced to hold and bind him. *Impatiens ægrotus crudelem medicum facit*,—an impatient patient makes a physician more cruel than otherwise he would be. So would God deal more gently with thee but for such impatiences. And know that this is taking God's name in vain in a high degree. You must know that the graces of God written in your hearts are a part of God's name, as whereby his love is manifested to you. Now for you to call the truth of these in question, and say they are counterfeit, is as if you should say of the king's hand and seal, when it comes down to you, that it were counterfeit, and deny it; which is *crimen lœsæ majestatis*. So if a special friend, or your father, had given you some old precious pieces of gold or jewels, &c., as tokens of their love and remembrances of them, for you to say in a distempered fit of jealousy, all these are but counters and but alchemy, you should exceedingly wrong and abuse their love. Thus is it if you deny God's handwriting in your own hearts, when he hath written therein by his Spirit, joy, fear, love, zeal, &c., and should say it is not like his hand. So if you deny the seal of the Spirit, after he hath sealed you up unto the day of redemption, and say that all the earnest-pennies of heaven are but counters, and alchemy, and nothing worth, in so doing you take his name, his love, his mercy, and all in vain; yea, you lie against the Holy Ghost, as the Apostle said in another case. Thus though God give you full leave to try and examine all his graces in you and dealings with you; yet not desperately, at the first blush and view, upon the least mistake or flaw, to say they are no graces, and that he will never be merciful. You abuse him when you do so; take heed of it.

DIRECTION II.

Secondly, Let the troubled soul make diligent search. Let an inquisition be set up in thy heart, So, Ps. lxxvii. 6, David, in case of desertion, is said to do: 'I communed with mine own heart, and made diligent search.'

Now in this search make inquiry into two things:—

First, What might be the true *cause* which provokes God thus to leave thee, and hide himself from thee?

Secondly, What in thine own heart is the main doubt and objection, reasoning and apprehension, which causeth thee to fear, and thus to call all into question?

These are two distinct things. For though God hath just cause and reason to leave us to this trouble, yet often the thing that troubles and disquiets us is a mere mistake, a misapprehension; even as a father sees good reason often to scare the child, but yet the thing he suffers him to be affrighted with is but a mere bugbear. It is necessary to inquire into both.

First, Examine what might be the true cause that provokes God thus to leave thee. So Lam. iii. 40, 'Let us search and try our ways;' it was spoken by the church in desertion, as appears by the former part of the chapter. And to help yourselves in this, go over all the *cases* which have been propounded. Hast thou not been carnally confident in false signs? or rested too much on true, to the neglect of Christ and God's free grace? Didst thou not before neglect to stir up thy own graces? &c. Go over all those cases mentioned; something or other will be found to be the cause. This is necessary, for till the cause be known, the heart submits not; neither will it sanctify God's name, nor will the trouble cease, till that which provokes God to lay it on be confessed and forsaken. And if it be a particular sin that God aims at, then usually God useth the horror for, and the guilt of, that very sin to afflict thee with; and then that sin itself is made the cause of thy trouble in thy own apprehension. So as then it is easily found out; thou wilt find thy sin to be the thorn in thy foot, the stone in thy shoe, that did grate, gall, and vex thee. David easily knew, in Ps. li., what it was for which God broke his bones; for his very sin was the iron mace, the instrumental cause itself, of God's executing it upon him: the horror of that murder God used as the hammer to break him withal, and as the rod to whip him with: ver. 3, 'My sin,' says he, 'is ever before me;' it was ever in his eye. Indeed, in outward afflictions it is more difficult to find out the cause why God afflicts a man; unless sometimes you may, through God's wise-disposing hand, find and read the sin in the punishment, they so resemble one another: so as a man may say, This cross lay in the womb of such a sin, they are so like,—*in quo peccamus in eodem plectimur*. But in those inward distresses of conscience, that sin which is the true cause, and that moveth God to afflict, God often useth even the guilt of that very sin to terrify thee; to cast a man into the distress, and to keep him in it; it is both the procatarctical cause and executioner also.

But in case thou canst not find out the cause, as Job, it seems, did not; and Elihu did suppose he might not, therefore gives him this counsel, (which do thou also follow till God shew thee the cause,) Job xxxiv. 31, 32, 'to say unto God,' as he adviseth there, 'That which I see not, teach thou me, and I will not offend any more;' and if thou findest it, say also, as ver. 31, 'I have borne chastisement' for such a sin; 'I will never offend any more.' Till then God will not let thee down.

The *second* thing to be searched into is, What is the chief and main reasoning in thy heart which makes thee call all into question whether God be thy God? What is the reason why thou thinkest so, what makes thee conclude so?

For this you must consider, that although God for some sin committed doth hide himself from thee, terrifies and lasheth thy conscience, yet that which causeth in thee and worketh in thee this apprehension, that God hath cast thee off, is usually some false reasoning or misapprehension, some mere mistake, some device and sophistry of Satan. When the Corinthian was ex-

communicated for his sin, Satan had leave to terrify his conscience for it; but Satan went further, he would have 'swallowed him up of sorrow,' by persuading him that such a sin was unpardonable, and that God would never own him again. Now the reasoning Satan used to bring this upon him was a false one, some trick and device, 2 Cor. ii. 7, compared with ver. 11; whereof if a man be ignorant, he may go mourning a long while as a cast-away. Therefore take thy soul aside, and seriously ask it, and examine it, why it is thus troubled; what reason, what ground thou hast to think that God is not thy God; and then examine it whether it be a true ground, yea or no. As the Apostle, 1 Pet. iii. 15, bids us 'give a reason of our faith, so ask thou of thy soul the reason of its doubting.

Thus David, Ps. xlii. 5, 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul?' And because doubts arise again and again, therefore he asketh the reason again, ver. 11, 'Why art thou cast down?' David knew the way to dissolve them was to search into and examine the reason of them; for still, when he had thoroughly examined them, he found them needless and causeless to put him into such desperate fears. The child of God is often cast into prison, into fears and bondage, and after he hath lain long in them, and begins to read over the writ and *mittimus*, he finds it to be false imprisonment, a mere trick of Satan, his jailer. For as carnal men, when they think their estate good, and that they are in the favour of God, it is some delusion, some false reasoning that is still the ground of such their opinion; as because they prosper in the world, therefore God loves them, because they perform some duties, have some good motions, which grounds they cannot endure to have examined: so contrarily, one that fears God, the ground of his apprehension that he is out of the favour of God is likewise some false reasoning, which, when examined, appears to be such, and when it appears the soul is freed out of its fears and doubts. Heman thought and said that God had cast him off; and what was the reason persuaded him to think so? Ps. lxxxviii. 14, 'because God had hidden his face.' It doth not follow, Heman. A father may hide his face from his son, and yet not cast him off. So David also reasoneth, Ps. lxxvii. 2, 3, 'I have sought God,' prayed, and used the means, and 'yet I am troubled,' and yet God reveals not himself; and what doth he conclude from this? Ver. 7, 'Will the Lord cast off for ever?' He thought, If God had loved me, he would presently have heard me; he thought his soul would not have been worse after praying. This was a false reasoning; for, Ps. lxx. 4, sometimes 'God shuts out his people's prayers.' A father may sometimes seem so angry that he may throw away his child's petition, and yet resolve to be his father still.

It were infinite to reckon up all the false reasonings that souls in distress have sometimes, from a place of Scripture misunderstood and misapplied. Some who, being annoyed with blasphemous thoughts against God and Christ, and his Spirit, though they be their greatest affliction, yet have thought they have sinned against the Holy Ghost, upon the misapplying that place, Matt. xii. 31, that 'blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven;' whereas that place is meant only but of some one kind of blasphemy, which indeed is wilful blaspheming of God and the work of his Spirit, out of revenge, Heb. x. 29. So some, because they have sinned after enlightening and tasting, and fallen into some gross sin, think they shall never be renewed, by reason of that place, Heb. vi. 4; whereas he speaks of a wilful and revengeful falling away, with such a revenge as they would, if they could, 'crucify Christ again,' ver. 6. For otherwise David had not been renewed, for he sinned presumptuously, and 'despised the command-

ment,' 2 Sam. xii. 9. So some, if they hear but of some fearful example, and of God's severe dealing with others, how he cast them off upon such a sin, as he did Saul, they think and conclude that upon the commission of the like that God hath cast them off also. But there is no certain ground for such a thought; for 'secret things belong to God.' So because some hear there is a time after which God sometimes offers grace no more, but swears against some men, therefore that their time is also past; which they can have no ground for: for though it be true God doth so with many that hear the gospel, yet the word gives us no certain rules to judge he hath done so by any of us. It is good to fear lest thou shouldst provoke him to it, but thou hast no sign to fear he hath done so with thee. And indeed herein lies the main and first business to be done in raising up a troubled soul, even to find out the ground of their doubting, and to examine the truth of it, and confute it. If a man be falsely imprisoned or cast in a suit at law, what doth he to remedy it? He seeks to find out the error in the writ. So do thou search out the ground of thy trouble; go to some spiritual lawyer skilled in soul-work: keep not the devil's counsel; he opposeth nothing more than making your doubts known.

DIRECTION III.

The third direction I give to such is, that they keep and lend one ear, as well to hear and consider what makes for their comfort, as unto what may make against them.

This direction meets with a great infirmity of such as are in distress, who through Satan's temptations have their hearts so deeply possessed with prejudicial conceits of the misery of their estates, that, as the people of God in Exod. vi. 9, 'through the anguish of their hearts,' were so far distempered that they listened not to the good message which Moses brought them, nor believed that so good news could be true of them: so are the souls of many that are in distress so filled with anguish and sense of misery, and so strongly prepossessed with desperate opinions, and so far put out of hopes, that they reject all that is spoken for their comfort; so as they will not so much as be brought to cast an eye or a thought upon anything that may be an occasion of comfort to them. Like some prisoners at the bar, through extremity of fear they cannot read that in their hearts and in the word which might save them. Tell them of what God hath wrought for them and in them, as evidences of his love; and as they cannot, so often they will not, read them over; or if they do, they read them over but as a man doth a book he means to confute: they pick quarrels, and make objections at everything that is said, as if they were hired as lawyers to plead against themselves, and to find flaws in their evidences. I have observed some who have set all their wits a-work to strengthen all arguments and objections against themselves, and who have been glad if they could object anything which might puzzle those who have come to comfort them; if they could hold argument against themselves; as if they were disputing for the victory only. And thus through much poring upon, and considering only what might make against them, they have had the bolts of their hearts so far shot into despair, and fixed in desperate sorrow, and the true wards of sound evidences so far wrung and wrested by false keys, that when the skilfulest and strongest comforters have come with true keys to shoot back the bolt, they would not turn about; nay, could scarce get entrance.

This was David's infirmity, as at the 10th verse of the 77th Psalm, com-

pared with the 2d verse, 'My soul refuseth to be comforted.' He spilt all the cordials and physic that were brought him: he was not only void of comfort, but refused it. What! bring me promises to comfort me!—will such a one say,—you may as well carry them to one in hell, or give physic to a man past recovery; and so will take down nothing that is given them. So also the church, in the 3d of the Lamentations, ver. 17, 18; her heart was deeply possessed with a desperate apprehension: 'My hope,' says she, 'is perished from the Lord.' And what was it that shot her soul into so fixed despair? Ver. 17, 'she forgot all good:' she *forgot*,—that is, she would not so much as take into consideration and remembrance anything that had been comfortable to her. *All good*,—so the original,—that is, all God's former good and gracious dealings with her, all the good things wrought in her, and for her, whence she might have comfort. And in stead thereof, what did her thoughts feed and chew upon? Only wormwood and gall, her bitterness and distress, poring only on what might make against her: 'I said my hope was perished from the Lord, calling to mind my affliction and my misery, my wormwood and gall.' These she could revolve and roll up and down in her mind, though they were bitter, and would entertain thoughts of nothing else. But when, on the contrary, she began to take into consideration God's gracious and faithful supporting her in that very desertion, 'in faithfulness renewing his mercies every morning,' ver. 22, 23, and that still he maintained in her heart a longing and lingering after him, and a secret cleaving to him, and that God did enable her to choose him as her portion, ver. 24,—'*this* I recall to mind,' says she, ver. 21, (which speech hath reference to those words fore-cited, which follow there,) 'therefore have I hope,'—she spits out her wormwood, and eats her own words. And now that her heart began to listen to what might comfort her, presently she began to have hope. This sullen, peevish, desperate obstinacy is a thing you ought to take heed of; for hereby you take Satan's part, and that against those you ought to love so dearly, even your own souls. But as they said, 'Let Baal plead for himself;' so let Satan plead his own cause, do not you. Hereby also you 'forsake your own mercies,' as it is said, Jonah ii. 8; you give up your own right, and are so far befooled as to plead against your own title, your own interest in the best things you can have interest in—God's mercies, made yours by an everlasting covenant; you give up your portion bequeathed you in your Father's will, which you ought to maintain; and you trust to lying vanities, the soothsayings and fortune-tellings, as I may call them, of Satan and of your own hearts. Hereby also 'ye become judges of evil thoughts,' James ii. 4; for he is an ill hearer of a cause who will hear but one party speak.

DIRECTION IV.

The fourth direction is, to make diligent search into, and to call to remembrance what formerly hath been between God and you. The remembrance of former things doth often uphold, when present sense fails. This David practised in the like case, Psalm lxxvii. 5, 6, when his soul had refused comfort, as I told you, ver. 2; yet in the end he began not only to be willing to listen to what might make for him, but set himself a-work to recall to mind, to 'consider the days of old, to make diligent search,' namely, into the records and register of God's dealings, ver. 11, to see if there were never a record extant which might help him, now the devil pleaded against his title. Even as if your houses and lands were called into question, you would search over old writings and deeds; so do you in this. 'I considered,' says he

'the songs in the night,'—that is, that joyful communion he had enjoyed with God, when God and he sang songs together,—and 'I communed with mine own heart, and made diligent search;' I tossed and tumbled over my heart, to see if no grace formerly had been there, and if no grace at present were there. He searched into what might comfort him, as well as into the causes might provoke God thus to deal with him; for I take it both may be meant.

And so Job did, when he was thus stricken and forsaken of God: he views over every part of his life; he seeks what dry land he could find to get footing upon in the midst of seas of temptations; recounts what a holy life he had lived, with what fear and strictness he had served God, chap. xxix. and chap. xxx., and chap. xxxi. throughout, and tells them plainly, chap. xxvii. 5, 6, that let them plead and argue what they could against him, and go about to prove him a hypocrite, 'till I die,' says he, 'I will not remove mine integrity from me, nor let go my righteousness:' I will never give up mine interest in God's mercies, nor the evidences I have to shew for them. And, says he, chap. xix. 27, 28, 'Though my reins be at present consumed, yet the root of the matter is in me,'—that is, though God deals thus hardly with me, as you see, yea, though the exercise of grace is much obscured, the sunshine of God's favour withdrawn, his face hidden from me, and the joyful fruits of righteousness, and comfortable fresh green speeches, and leaves you have known to grow upon this now withered stock fallen off; yet there is the root of the matter still in me—a root of faith that decays not, a constant frame of grace that still remains, which hateth sin, loveth God; and you shall all never beat me from it. And canst thou call nothing to remembrance betwixt God and thee, which argues infallibly his love? What! nothing? Look again. Did God never speak peace unto thy heart, and shed his love abroad in it? Hast thou at no time found in thine heart pure strains of true love and good-will to him, some pure drops of godly sorrow for offending him, and found some dispositions of pure self-denial, wherein thou didst simply aim at his glory more than thine own good? Hast thou never an old tried evidence which hath been acknowledged and confirmed again and again in open court? What! not one? And if thou canst now call to mind but one, if in truth, it may support thee. For if one promise do belong to thee, then all do, for every one conveys whole Christ, in whom all the promises are made, and who is the matter of them. As in the sacraments, the bread conveys whole Christ, and the wine also whole Christ: so in the word every promise conveys whole Christ. And if thou canst say, as the church of Ephesus, Rev. ii. 6, 'This thing I have, that I hate sin,' and every sin, as God hates it, and because he hates it: as Christ owned them for this one grace, and though they had many sins and many failings, yet, says he, this thou hast, &c. If Christ will acknowledge thee to be his for one ear-mark, or if he sees but one 'spot of his child' upon thee, Deut. xxxii. 5, thou mayest well plead it, even any one, to him. Yea, though it be but in a lesser degree, in truth and sincerity. For God brings not a pair of scales to weigh your graces, and if they be too light refuseth them: but he brings a touchstone to try them; and if they be true gold, though never so little of it, it will pass current with him; though it be but smoke, not flame, though it be but as a wick in the socket, Matt. xii. 20, (as it is there in the original,) likelier to die and go out than to continue, which we use to throw away; yet he will not quench it, but accept it. Yea, and though at present thou findest in thy sense no grace stirring in thee, nothing but hardness, deadness, &c., yet if thou canst remember, Yea, but this once I had; as a woman with

child, though after her first quickening she doth not always find the child to stir, yet because she did feel it stir, she still conceives hopes and thinks she is with child; so think thou of the new creature formed within thee.

These things you are to recall and consider in time of distress: to remember former graces and spiritual dispositions in you; and God's gracious dealings with you. God remembers them to have mercy on you; and why should you not remember them to comfort you? Therefore, Heb. vi. 9, 10, 'We hope,' says he, 'better things of you; for God is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love;' namely, to reward you. And therefore he calls upon them in like manner, Heb. x. 31, 'to call to remembrance the former days' to comfort them; how they held out when their hearts were tried to the bottom; when shipwreck was made of their goods, good names, and all for Christ,—yet they made not shipwreck of a good conscience. And if thou dost thus call to remembrance things of old, and yet canst find no comfort at first from them,—as often ye may not, as was David's case, Psalm lxxvii, for after his 'remembrance of his songs in the night,' still his soul was left in doubt, and he goes on to say, 'Will God ever be merciful?'—yet have recourse to them again, and then again, for though they comfort not at one time, yet they may at another: that it may be seen that God comforts by them, and not they alone of themselves. Hast thou found a promise (which is a 'breast of consolation,' Isa. lxvi. 11) milkless? Yet again suck; comfort may come in the end. If after thou hast empanelled a jury and grand inquest to search, and their first verdict condemns thee, or they bring in an *ignoramus*; yet do as wise judges often do, send them about it again, they may find it the next time. Jonah looked once, it seems, and found no comfort, chap. ii. 4, for he said, 'I will look again towards thine holy temple.' A man's heart is like those two-faced pictures: if you look one way towards one side of them, you shall see nothing but some horrid shape of a devil, or the like; but go to the other side and look again, and you shall see the picture of an angel or of some beautiful woman, &c. So some have looked over their hearts by signs at one time, and have to their thinking found nothing but hypocrisy, unbelief, hardness, self-seeking; but not long after, examining their hearts again by the same signs, they have espied the image of God drawn fairly upon the table of their hearts.

DIRECTION V.

But now if former signs remembered bring thee no comfort in, but the waves that come over thy soul prove so deep that thou canst find no bottom to cast anchor on, the storm and stress so great that no cable will hold, but they snap all asunder, as is often the case of many a poor soul:—

Then take and put in practice this fifth direction, *renew thy faith and repentance*, set thy heart a-work to believe and repent afresh as if thou hadst never yet begun. Spend not all the time in casting out of anchors, but fall a-pumping; leave off and cease a while to reason about the goodness of thy former faith and repentance, and set upon the work of believing and repenting anew. Say, Well, suppose I have not hitherto been in the state of grace, yet I am not incapable of it for time to come, I may obtain grace yet. Suppose my faith and repentance hath not been true hitherto, I will therefore now begin to endeavour after such as is true. And to that end make this use of whatsoever flaws the devil finds in either, to direct thee what to mend and rectify for time to come; begin to make up the breaches and unsoundness which is discovered, endeavour after a supply of all those wants he

objects to be in either: mend all the holes he picks. Say, Lord, I cast my soul on all thy mercies afresh; I desire now to make my heart perfect with thee for time to come, to part with every sin, to submit to every duty, to curse every by-end to hell, and to set up God and Christ as my mark, pole-star, and aim in all. And when thou hast done this, let the devil say his worst. This of all the former directions I commend to you, as a special means to dissolve and put these temptations about assurance to an end. I set a *probatum est* upon it; take it, practise it, it is a tried one; and it is that which at the last the church in desertion comes to: Lam. iii. 40, 'Come, let us try our ways, and turn to the Lord;' that is the last way and course she takes. Now when the water is at the lowest, and the tide of assurance ebbed, mend up your banks, as you use to do at low waters. Now when nothing but hypocrisy, and unbelief, and falseness of heart appear to thee to be in thy heart, do thou groan, sigh, endeavour after the contrary sincerity; and let Satan say his worst. And this direction I now in the next place prescribe you, because in time of temptation about assurance, it is the usual course of some troubled souls to spend all their thoughts upon what formerly they have had, as if they must have comfort only from the former work, or no way; laying out all their time and cost in new suits and new trials about their former title; and when they have been cast again and again, yet still to do nothing but read over old evidences again and again, and bring in and study new proofs.

But know, that though this is to be done, and not to be neglected, and is found often comfortable, therefore in the former direction I exhorted to it: yet you are not only to take that course, nor to look back so much to your former faith and repentance as to forget to practise new; but being to practise new acts of faith and repentance, this is the rightest way, the shortest cut, and requires as little pains. Thou mayest with as little charge get a new lease renewed, as prove good the old one; it will require many terms to examine over all thy evidences again and again, which also haply are blotted and blurred. Thou mayest cut the knot and dissolve the temptations sooner by new faith, than untie it by reasonings and disputings. And the truth is, in the end thou must come to this; for God's great end in deserting is to put you upon renewing your faith and repentance. 'Except ye be converted,' as Christ says to his apostles, converted as it were anew. He will not deliver thee out of the dungeon, till thou enterest into new bonds and bail for thy good behaviour. Therefore begin to do it soon. And whereas thou thinkest that by this thou mayest prejudice thy former title, that is not my meaning, as if thou shouldest utterly give up thy old faith and repentance as counterfeit; 'I will keep my integrity,' says Job: only my advice is to forbear, and to cease pleading of it for a time, and to begin to renew it rather, that is it I exhort unto. And then the comfort of thy old repentance will come in. As the apostle says of the law, so I of thy former title, 'it is not destroyed, but established' rather by this. And as Christ says, John vii. 17, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine that it is of God;' so as the best way to know the truth is not to spend all the time in disputing about it, but to practise it, which puts an end to controversies in men's hearts: so say I, to know the truth of, and so to come to have the comfort of former grace, is to add to these reasonings about it, the practice of believing and repenting anew. This baffles the devil exceedingly, and gets the advantage of him; for by this the suit is removed, all his old pleas dashed, this puts him upon a new reply, diverts the war, and indeed nonplusseth him; for what can he say to it? He must now prove thou art

incapable of grace, that thou shalt never repent, which all the world and devils in hell cannot prove. And yet if in this case he tells thee, as usually he doth, that all will be in vain for time to come, as well as it hath been for time past:—

DIRECTION VI.

Then, sixthly, stand not now disputing it, but be peremptory and resolute in thy faith and turning to God, let the issue be what it will be. Faith is never nonplussed. Job vows 'he will trust him though he kills him,' chap. xiii. 15. So do thou; whether he will damn or save thee, do what he will with thee, leave not to cast thyself upon him for mercy, nor to serve and love him. Go thou on to use the means diligently and constantly; and be so much the more diligent, fear and hate sin still, pray day and night: as Heman did when he thought himself cut off, Ps. lxxxviii. 1, 'I have cried day and night, though I be as one thou rememberest no more,' ver. 4, 5; and so at the 9th verse, 'I have called daily.' Though, ver. 10–12, he thought himself in hell, and thought it a miracle ever to be raised up again, yet says he, ver. 13, 'but I have cried to thee.' That *but* seems to come in as an expression of his resolution hitherto, that though these were his apprehensions of his condition, yet howsoever, he had, and accordingly would go on to seek the Lord. Suppose thou findest no relish in the ordinances, yet use them; though thou art desperately sick, yet eat still, take all is brought thee, some strength comes of it. Say, Be I damned or saved, hypocrite or not hypocrite, I resolve to go on. And there is good reason for it; for if thou shouldest leave off to serve the Lord, and resolve never to look after him more, then thou art sure to be damned. If there be 'an evil heart in thee to depart from the living God,' thou art undone. But this other way of seeking him, thou mayest in the end prevail; 'Who knows but God may be merciful?' In the 3d of the Lamentations, ver. 29, this counsel is given to a soul being yoked and deserted, 'to put his mouth in the dust; and it waiteth,' says he, suffers, and doth anything, not only if he hath hope, but 'if there may be hope,' if there be but such a thought it may prove so, he will make a venture; and so do thou. See what Esther did in the like desperate case: thought she, If I hold my tongue, (and so Mordecai told her,) God will destroy me. And better it was to make a venture upon the king to speak, and so to carry her life in her hand; and therefore she says, 'If I perish, I perish.' And so the lepers, see how they reasoned in a desperate case: 2 Kings vii. 3, 4, 'If we go into the city, we are sure to die, for the famine is there; if we sit still, we die also. Come, let us fall into the hands of the Assyrians: if they save us alive, so; if they kill us, we shall,' however, 'but die.' And there were many strong arguments to move them to think they would kill them, for they were Jews, and so of the enemy's side, and might be suspected for spies; if not, they were lepers, that might infect the camp, who were fit for no service, for nothing but to be knocked on the head. Yet in this desperate case they took the surer and more probable part, ventured to fall to the Assyrians' side, and the success is known to you all. So reason thou: If I give over my believing, humbling myself, praying, attending on the means, I shall certainly perish, there is no help for it; I will therefore rather go on to do all these as sincerely as I can to the utmost, and if God saves me, a sinner, a leper, an enemy, so; if not, I can be but damned.

But let me tell thee, such a resolution can never go to hell with thee; yea, if any have a room in heaven, such a soul shall: for this puts not the devil only to it;—for in this case, what can the devil himself say to thee?

for if thou wilt venture thy soul, service, and all upon God, let the issue be what it will, in this resolute yet safe way; if thou wilt in a pure trust refer it unto God with contentedness and submission, what is that to him?—but it puts God to it also, who cannot find in his heart to damn such a one who shall go on to do thus. When thou thus freely servest him, choosest him, venturest and leavest thyself and all the issue of thy ways to him; thou, by this one act in such a case, shalt win more upon him and his love, than haply by all thy obedience all thy life before. Thy salvation, and the assurance of it, that is God's work, leave it to him, try his faithfulness; it is self-love makes us too much to be troubled about it. Go thou on to believe, repent, mourn for sin, hate, forsake it; to use the means, &c.; that is thy work; and so doing, thou canst not be damned.

DIRECTION VII.

Let him trust in the name of the Lord.

If you ask what ground a soul in this case may have to venture thus upon—

I answer, His *name;* which will make up a seventh direction.

Being thus resolved to turn to God, and to go on to fear and obey him, thou mayest safely and confidently trust in and stay upon the name of God, when thou hast nothing else to rest upon. This, you see, is the direction which the text gives; and I had thought therefore to have made a distinct point of it; but I will somewhat more largely open and explain it, only as it is a direction, and means of support and comfort in this distress, and so take it as it riseth out of the text. Thus—

That to one who resolves to fear God and obey him, the name of God is an all-sufficient prop and stay for his faith to rest on, when he sees nothing in himself, or in any promise in the world belonging unto him.

The name of God alone is here opposed to all other means and props which faith hath to rest on. It is opposed to all comfortable sense of God's love, to all sight of any grace in a man's self to which any promise is made. So that when the soul shall look into itself with one eye, and glance over all the word of God with another; and yet shall see not any one grace in the one, nor promise in the other made to any grace within itself which it may rest upon; yet the soul then looking upon God, and considering what a God he is, and what he says of himself, of his mercy and kindness, and free grace towards sinful men, even the sole consideration of what merely it knows to be in God, as he is revealed in the covenant of grace, may support him. This it is to stay upon his name.

Now, to explain this further to you. By the name of God two things are meant:—

First, Those glorious attributes, especially of grace and mercy, whereby God hath expressed himself, and made himself known to us.

Secondly, Jesus Christ, as he is made and set forth to be righteousness to the sons of men.

For the *first,* in Exod. xxxiv. 4–7, the Lord proclaimed his name, 'The Lord God, merciful, gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and will by no means clear the impenitent.'

For the *second,* I refer to that place, Jer. xxiii. 6, speaking of Christ, 'This is the name wherewith he shall be called,' or made known to us, 'THE

LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS;' that is, that Jesus Christ, who is God, hath righteousness in him for us, which may be made ours.

So that when a poor soul in distress is not able to say, I see such or such signs, or any evidence in myself, whereby I can say God is my God, or that Christ is mine; yet because I see free grace enough in God, and righteousness in Christ, which I, being a sinful man, and not a devil, may therefore be capable of, and may come to have an interest in them, though I know nothing in myself whereby I can challenge any present interest; and because Grace and Mercy is his name, and Our Righteousness his Son's name, therefore I do cast myself upon both for pardon and favour, and thereupon my soul leans, stays, and abides, and from these it will not be driven. So that these two apprehensions meeting in the heart in truth, help to make up this resting upon his name here spoken of: namely, first, that there is such free grace, good-will, and mercy, &c., in God, and that Jesus Christ is appointed and made to be our righteousness; and, secondly, that I am capable of, and may come to have an interest in both these, and that though there be nothing in me which may challenge an interest in them, yet there is nothing that excludes me; whereupon I cast myself upon God for both, and there rest; yea, though I cannot yet say that ever I shall obtain them. And this, where it is truth, and accompanied with that firm resolution of turning to God in all things before-mentioned, is as good faith as any of you have in your hearts.

And so I come to the proof of this: namely, that when the name of God and Christ are thus simply and alone apprehended, they may be sufficient ground for faith to rest upon; than which nothing can be more comfortable to a poor distressed believer. Num. xiv., when God's wrath waxed hot against his people, as sometimes in like manner it doth against a poor soul, that God began to say, 'How long shall they provoke me?' ver. 11, and speaks of destroying them, and of making Moses a great nation; what hath Moses's faith recourse unto, but to that proclamation of his name you heard of before? and urgeth that, ver. 17, 18, 'Let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken. The Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.' And he desires him to shew his power in pardoning, because as much power is seen in overcoming his wrath as in making a world. 'Let thy power be great;' it was his name, you see, that was alleged by Moses, and prevailed with God for mercy. So also for his Son's sake, 'The Lord our righteousness:' Elihu says, Job xxxiii., when a man's soul is in deepest distress, as in ver. 19–22 he describes it, yet says he, ver. 23, 'If there be a messenger to shew a man his uprightness,'—that is, that righteousness that is laid up for men in the Lord Jesus,—'then God is gracious to him, and says, Deliver him;' and, he resting thereupon, 'his flesh returns to him again,' becoming a means to stay him and restore him. I mention these places of the Old Testament rather than of the New; out of which you see God's name and his Son's name are all-sufficient to uphold and support a soul. So the penman of that psalm, whether David or whoever, Ps. cxxx., when he was 'in his depths,' as ver. 1, 2, plunged over head and ears in sorrow and discomfiture, what hath his faith recourse unto? ver. 4, 'to God's name,' to nothing that was in himself, but simply to what his faith apprehended to be in God. 'Mercy is with thee;' he says no more: in him, and with him, it is to be had. And he confirms his faith in that by this argument, because else 'none would fear him;' and, 'if thou wert extreme to mark what were amiss, no man could stand,' or *would* be saved. Therefore, 'surely,' says he, 'mercy is with thee,' and,

'therefore let Israel hope in the Lord,' ver. 7. And why? What! because Israel sees he hath grace in himself? No, but because 'mercy is with him and plenteous redemption,' ver. 7; which word redemption hath relation to his Son's name. There is enough in him, else he will have none; and Israel is mentioned in his will as capable of it; and therefore, says he, 'I will wait and hope in the Lord,' ver. 5. And though he could not say that God had forgiven him, yet 'forgiveness was with him,' and there he pitcheth and resteth his soul; as a beggar at a great man's door, when there is none else in the country able or willing to relieve him, there he lies, though he knows not whether he shall have anything or no. 'In my father's house there is bread enough,' says the prodigal; there it is to be had, and nowhere else; and there is enough. And crumbs will serve me, says the woman of Canaan. Thou art the Mediator, thought she, and it is thy business to save; and though I am a dog, yet I am capable of having crumbs. 'Woman,' says Christ, 'great is thy faith;' not such faith among all my disciples. These trusted in his name, and nothing in themselves. So Ps. lxii., David says, at ver. 5, 'he trusted in God for salvation and mercy,' and exhorts throughout the whole, 'trust in God fully, and at all times, and in no creature,' ver. 8, 9. And what was it he rested upon? Simply two attributes of his, viz., mercy and power: 'God hath spoken once,' (that is, irrevocably; as Ps. lxxxviii. 35, 'Once have I sworn,' &c.,) 'and twice I have heard this,'—that is, often met with it in the word, and thought of it,—says he, 'that with God is power,' ver. 11, so as he is able to save in the greatest distress; and I have heard that 'to him belongeth mercy also,' ver. 12, and therefore he may be willing to help; and because these are in him, though I have nothing in myself, yet these I rest upon, and these alone. Many such instances more might be brought.

The *reasons* why the name of God, and what is in God, is prop sufficient for faith to rest upon, are—

Reason 1.—Because the name of God, that is, God's attributes, and Christ's righteousness, do sufficiently, and adequately, and fully answer all wants and doubts, all objections and distresses we can have, or can be in. Whatsoever our want or temptations be, he hath a name to make supply. For example, to take that his name in pieces, mentioned Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6, consider every letter in that his name, and every letter answers to some temptation may be made by us.

Art thou in misery and great distress? He is merciful; 'The Lord merciful.' The *Lord*, therefore *able* to help thee; and *merciful*, therefore *willing*.

Yea, but thou wilt say, I am unworthy; I have nothing in me to move him to it. Well, therefore, he is *gracious;* now grace is to shew mercy freely. Yea, but I have sinned against him long, for many years; if I had come in when I was young, mercy might have been shewn me. To this he says, 'I am *long-suffering.*' Yea, but my sins every way abound in number, and it is impossible to reckon them up, and they abound in heinousness; I have committed the same sins again and again; I have been false to him, broke promise with him again and again. His name also answers this objection, he is *abundant in goodness;* he abounds more in grace than thou in sinning. And though thou hast been false again and again to him, and broke all covenants, yet he is *abundant in truth;* also better than his word, for he cannot to our capacities express all that mercy that is in him for us. Yea, but I have committed great sins, aggravated with many and great circumstances, against knowledge, wilfully, &c. He forgives *iniquity, transgression, and sin;* sins of all sorts. Yea, but there is mercy thus in him but

for a few, and I may be none of the number. Yes, there is mercy for *thousands*. And he *keeps* it; treasures of it lie by him, and are kept, if men would come and take them.

Object what thou canst, his name will answer thee. Needest thou comfort as well as pardon? He is both 'Father of mercies' and 'God of all comforts;' that is his name, 2 Cor. i. 3. Needest thou peace of conscience, being filled with terrors? He is the 'God of peace,' 1 Thess. v. 23. Yea, but I have a heart empty of grace and holiness, and full of corruptions. He is the 'God of all grace' to heal thee, as well as of peace to pardon thee. Needest thou wisdom and direction? He is the 'Father of lights,' as the Apostle says. Is thy heart inconstant and full of double-mindedness? He is 'unchangeable' also, as he speaks there, James i. Thus all objections that can be made may be answered out of his name. Therefore it is all-sufficient for faith to rest upon.

The like may be fully shewed in his Son's name; in whom God hath made himself strong to shew mercy and bestow all good things. Whose name is adequate to God's name; that is, is of as large extent in worth and merit, as God's heart is in his purposes of shewing and bestowing mercies, to purchase all that God meant to bestow. Whose name hath likewise an all-sufficiency in it to supply all our wants and desires, and satisfy all scruples. For example, that his name mentioned by the prophet, Isa. ix. 6, which he here directs to, compared with 1 Cor. i. 30. For, would we have peace of conscience, and the guilt of sins removed? He is the 'Prince of Peace,' and is made 'righteousness' to us. Are we in depths of distress, terrors within, terrors without, out of which we see no redemption? He is the 'mighty God;' 'able to save to the utmost,' being made 'redemption' to us. Want we grace and his image to be renewed and increased in us? He is 'the everlasting Father;' a *father* to beget his likeness in us, and *everlasting* to maintain it ever, when it is begun once: he is made 'sanctification' to us. Want we wisdom to guide us? He is the 'Counsellor,' and is made *wisdom* to us. All we want he hath; even as all he hath we want. And further, although we not only want all these, but never so much of all these, his name is also 'Wonderful.' For such he is in all these; able to do beyond all our expectations, to wonderment.

Or if the soul desires more distinct and particular satisfaction in point of justification, which consists in the pardon of sins and acceptation to the favour of God, it being the point which in this state of desertion is questioned, and wherein the soul desires satisfaction; that other name of his, 'The Lord our righteousness,' Jer. xxiii. 6, will answer all objections and doubts that our hearts can make, if we had but skill to spell all the letters in it. For if that righteousness of his satisfied God, who, in condemning us, is greater than our hearts, 1 John iii. 20, then it may satisfy our hearts much more. The righteousness of his life and death is not only ἀντίλυτρον, an adequate sufficient ransom, 1 Tim. ii. 6, but there is 'plenteous redemption' in it, Ps. cxxx., yea, to superfluity, as the Apostle's phrase implies: ὑπερεπλεόνασε, 1 Tim. i. 14, that is, over-full, more than would serve the turn, and that to pardon his sins, who, ver. 15, was 'the chief of sinners.' He elsewhere challengeth all the wit and powers of sin and hell and darkness to appear in this dispute, and undertakes to answer them all out of this one position, which he lays as a bottom truth, 'Christ hath died,' Rom. viii. 34, which is in effect the same with this, 'The Lord our righteousness;' 'Who therefore,' says he, 'shall condemn?' What can be alleged, either in the *heinousness* of sin in general, or in any of thy sins in particular, unto which

an answer may not hence be fetched from the righteousness of his death and life? Is it that sin is an offence against the great God—'Against thee, against thee,' &c., as David speaks? And is not this his righteousness, the righteousness of Jehovah—Jehovah our righteousness, who is the mighty God? Is the glory of this great God, and all his excellencies, debased by us in sinning? And will not the emptying of his glory, Phil. ii. 7, whose name is 'the brightness of his Father's glory,' Heb. i. 3, in performing this righteousness for us, satisfy and make amends? Are our sins the transgression of the holy and righteous law in every part of it? And did not Jehovah, who gave and made that law, to make himself our righteousness, 'make himself under the law,' Gal. iv. 4, and, to make up a full righteousness, fulfil every part of it? Rom. viii. 3, 4. Is it thy continuance in sin, and the number and the iteration of them, that amazeth thee? 'All fulness dwells in him' who is our righteousness, Col. i. 19, and hath dwelt in him longer than sin in thee; and the righteousness of our Messiah is 'everlasting righteousness,' Dan. ix. 24; the merit of which an eternity of sinning could not expend or make void. And is all this righteousness laid up for himself only, or for any other sort of creatures, so as thou mightest never come to have an interest in it? No; the top of our comfort is, that '*our* righteousness' is one letter of his name, and that our names are put into his. *For us* it is, and *ours* it is ordained to be: as much ours, to save us, trusting upon it, as his own to glorify him. Ours, not for himself; he had no need of it, being God blessed for ever. Ours, not the angels'; neither the good, for they are justified by their own; nor the bad, they are put out of God's will for ever. But ours, who are the sons of men; and among them, theirs especially who are 'broken, lost, whose souls draw near to the grave, and their lives to the destroyers,' and that come and pray unto God, and stay themselves upon it: unto them God cannot deny it, for it is theirs. For he will 'render to man his righteousness,' Job xxxiii. 22, 26. So as his Son's name also is all-sufficient to answer all objections for faith to rest upon: 'So as they that know his name will trust in him,' Ps. ix. 10.

Reason 2.—A second reason why his name is sufficient, though you have and see nothing in you, nor any promise made to any grace in you to rest upon, is, because even all those promises made to conditions in us, which we ordinarily look unto, are 'yea and amen' only in this his name and his Son's name. That is the original of them all, the root, the seed of them all; his name is the *materia prima*, the first matter of all those secondary promises, *ex quo fiunt, et in quod resolvuntur;* his name gives being to them all. If it were not for the mercy, grace, truth, kindness in him, and the righteousness which is in his Son, all the promises which are made, what were they worth? As the worth of bonds depends upon the sufficiency of the man who makes them, so all these promises upon his name. Therefore now, when you rely upon his name, having as yet no promise made to any thing in you to rely upon, you then rely upon that which is the foundation of all those promises; you then have recourse to the original, which is more authentical than extract copies; you rely on that which all those other are resolved into, and therefore is sufficient, though all the rest fail you in your apprehension.

Reason 3.—Thirdly, his mere name is support enough for faith, and may be so; because it is for his name's sake, and his Son's name's sake, he doth all he doth; and for nothing in us, but merely for what is in himself. So Isa. xlviii. 9, 10, 'For my name's sake,' &c.; so also Ezek. xxxvi. 22, 32, 'For my name's sake, and not your sake;' and Isa. xliii. 25, 'I am he that blot-

teth out thy transgression for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' For it he blotteth out transgression, and pardoneth. And if it be for his name's sake he doth all he doth, and fulfilleth all promises made to us, and to what is in us, then when thou seest nothing in thyself to which any promise is made, nothing which may appear to be any argument or motive that he will pardon thee, then trust thou in that his name; that because he is God, and hath mercy in him, that therefore he will do it. For that thing which is the only or main motive to God himself to do anything for us, must needs be, when apprehended and believed, the strongest and surest ground for our faith also, to persuade the heart that he will do it. As it is in knowledge, the knowledge of the cause of things causeth the surest knowledge; so in faith, the knowledge of the main motive to God the cause of all, causeth the greatest certainty of persuasion.

This then may direct poor souls in distress what to venture all upon; upon what ground to hazard souls, labours, endeavours, faith, repentance, obedience, and all, upon his name, when they see nothing in themselves to which any promise belongs. As David says, Ps. lxxiii. 26, 'My heart may fail, and my flesh may fail, but God will never fail:' so I may say, your comforts in prayers, in hearing, your joys, your earnest-pennies you have laid up, may be all spent in a dearth, your own graces, and all promises made to them; your own hearts may fail, and being creatures they use to fail again and again; but God's name and his Son's name, rested on, will never fail you. Lean on these, not by halves, in distress, but trust perfectly, as the Apostle says, on that mercy you hear is in God, upon that grace revealed, 1 Pet. i. 13,—that is, throw and cast your whole souls, your whole weight upon it. He only 'hath perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee,' Isa. xxvi. 3. Have not half thy soul on that 'rock which is higher than thou,' Ps. lxi. 2, but creep up and get all upon it; and when all fail, renew thy faith on his name. Thereon rest, there die. To this purpose may that of Solomon serve, Prov. xviii. 10: 'His name,' says he, 'is a strong tower, and the righteous fly to it, and are safe.' Now what end is there and use of a tower in a city, but when all outworks are taken, the walls scaled, all fortifications forsaken, houses left? then a tower holds out last, and is a refuge to flee to. So also when the devil and God's wrath beleaguers thee round, and encompasseth thy soul, and the comfort of every grace in thee is taken from thee, and thou art driven from, and art forced to forsake all other thy holds and grounds of comfort, then fly to the name of the Lord as thy city of refuge; as, Heb. vi. 18, it is compared. Say, There is mercy in thee, Lord, and that is thy name; and there is righteousness in thy Son, and that is his name: and I am directed to trust in thy name in time of need. And here rest, and catch hold as on the horns of the altar; and if thou diest, die there.

DIRECTION VIII.

The eighth direction is, to *wait* upon God, thus trusting in his name, in the constant use of all ordinances and means of comfort. Waiting is indeed but an act of faith further stretched out. As an allegory is but a continued metaphor, so waiting is but a continuing to believe on God, and to look for help from him with submission, though he stays long ere he comes. Waiting is an act of faith resting on God; and an act of hope expecting help from him; an act of patience, the mind quietly contenting itself till God doth come; and of submission if he should not come. Therefore, says the church, *being in this* very case, Lam. iii. 26, 'It is good to hope, and quietly to wait

for the salvation of the Lord.' It is good indeed to do so: for God will afflict you less, ease you the sooner, comfort you the more when he doth come; and in the meanwhile it makes you to 'possess your souls,' and to be yourselves, and upholds them. And to do otherwise, to be impatient, and to 'give over looking for the Lord,' as Ahaz did, is the greatest folly that can be; for, as Job says, chap. xii. 14, 'If he shut up, there is no opening;' all the world cannot let you out; he keeps the keys of the dungeon, and you must stay his leisure. And he stays but for a fit time to let you out, Isa. xxx. 18, 'He will wait to be gracious to you, for he is a God of judgment,' a wise and judicious God, and knows the fittest times and seasons. And that he stays so long is not out of want of mercy, for he waits and longs to be gracious, but he doth it out of judgment, and his wisdom sees not a fit time; he is grieved as well as you that you are not yet fit for mercy, that his mercy should not yet be exalted, if he would shew it, till you further see your misery; and therefore, says he, 'Blessed are all they that wait for him.' And as he now waiteth but to be the more gracious to thee, so he did heretofore a long while wait for thee, that thou shouldest begin to turn to him and say, 'When will it once be?' Jer. xiii. 27. Thou madest him stay thy leisure in turning from thy sin; why may he not make thee stay his for the pardon of it? And indeed the escaping hell in the end is so great a mercy, that it is worth the waiting for all thy days, though thou endure a hell here, and gettest not a good look till the very last gasp and moment of living; therefore 'put thy mouth in the dust, and wait quietly, if there may be hope' at last, Lam. iii. 20.

And waiting thus, go on to use all the means of grace more diligently, more constantly, though thou findest a long while no good by them. Omit no ordinance God hath appointed for thy comfort and recovery. As in a long sickness, you still use means though many have failed; as the woman who had the bloody issue spent all upon physicians, in the use of means for her recovery. That trouble of mind doth only hurt you that drives you from the means. Therefore the devil endeavours nothing more than to keep such souls from the word, from good company, from the sacraments, from prayer, by objecting their unprofitableness unto them, and that all is in vain, and that you do but increase your condemnation.

But, first, if thou learnest no other lesson in the use of the means but that thou art of thyself most unprofitable, and that unless God teacheth thee to profit no good is done, and so learnest to depend upon God in the ordinance; this is a great degree of profiting.

And, secondly, as when men are sick and eat, and cast up again, you use to say, yet take something down, for some strength is gotten, something remains in the stomach which keeps life and soul together: so I say here, though thou shouldest forget in a manner all thou hearest, seemest to reap no benefit by it, yet hear, for some secret strength is gotten by it. And as for increasing thy condemnation, know that utterly to neglect and despise the means is greater condemnation; and that to use the means would lessen thy condemnation. Therefore read, pray, meditate, hear, confer, receive the sacraments, forbear not these your appointed meals. Indeed when the body is sick ye use to forbear your appointed food, but when the soul is sick there is more need of them than ever. All these are both meat and medicine, food, physic, cordials, and all. Use reading the word; the Scriptures were written for our consolation, therefore read them much; attend on preaching, for 'God creates the fruit of the lips, Peace,' Isa. lvii. 19. So receive the sacrament often: those days are sealing days; go thou and confess thy sins,

write over thy pardon, put in all thou knowest by thyself, bring it to Christ to set his seal to it.

Only take this caution, that thou trust not to the use of the means, but unto God in the means. To think, Oh, I shall have comfort by such a man, or at such a time, in such an ordinance; this often dasheth all. So believe in God as if you used no means, and yet as diligently use the means, even as if your confidence were to be in them.

DIRECTION IX.

To pray: pleas to be used to God in prayer for recovery out of this condition.

And, ninthly, above all things *pray;* and get others also to pray for thee, for God often 'restores comfort' unto such at the request of mourners for them, Isa. lvii. 18. But yet especially be earnest and fervent in pouring forth thy complaint thyself; for though the speaking of friends may somewhat further thy suit, yet, as between two wooers, so it must be wrought out between God and thee alone in private; and his good-will must be obtained by wooing him in secret. This counsel the Apostle gives you, James v. 13, 'Is any man afflicted? let him pray.' And because of all afflictions else, this of darkness in a man's spirit needeth prayer the most; therefore David pens a psalm on purpose, not for his own private use only, but for the benefit and use of all other in the like distress, as, by the title of it, doth appear, Ps. cii.: 'A prayer for the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.' And this, says David, is my constant practice, 'when my soul is overwhelmed, I pour out my prayer unto thee,' Ps. lxi. 2. And it was Christ's also, for in his agony 'he prayed yet more earnestly,' Luke xxii. 44.

When at any time, therefore, thy sins and God's wrath, meeting in thy conscience, make thee deadly sick, as Isaiah speaks, then pour forth thy soul, lay open and confess thy sin; and as it will ease thee, as vomiting useth to do, so also it will move God to pity, and to give thee cordials and comforts to restore thee again. Thus David, Ps. xxxviii. 18, (being in great distress, ver. 2–5,) 'I will declare mine iniquity, and be sorry for my sin;' and he makes it an argument to God to pardon him, when his bones were broken, Ps. li., 'Cleanse me from my sin,' ver. 2, 'for I acknowledge my transgressions,' ver. 3; and when he had confessed, ver. 4–6, then he cries, 'Make me to hear of joy and gladness,' ver. 8; and 'restore unto me the joy of thy salvation,' ver. 12. And what was the chief ingredient, the main and principal motive, which wrought most kindly with him to confess and mourn, and brought up all? 'Against thee, thee only:' he puts in twice as much of the consideration thereof as of any other ingredient, to make his heart mourn; that chiefly, if not only, melted, dissolved him. And in these thy confessions, let the same also mainly work with thee. Against thee, thee, have I sinned, thus oft, thus grievously, thus presumptuously; against thee, a God so great, and yet withal so good, so kind, so willing to receive and pardon, if my heart (say) were but as willing to turn unto thee. And when thy case is as Job's was, chap. x. 15–17, that 'thou art full of confusion,' as he speaks there; so full as thou thinkest thy heart could hold no more; and yet 'it increaseth,' as it is there, and he fills thee fuller yet;—then do thou pour out thy complaints to him, as he pours in confusion into thee; and when he 'hunts' thee, as Job there complains, 'like a fierce lion,' fall *thou down* and humble thyself like a poor and silly lamb; if thou diest, die at

his feet, mourning, bleeding out thy soul in tears. And when he hunts thee up and down, and pursues thee with blow after blow, 'follow thou hard after him' wherever he goes, Ps. lxiii. 8, with complaint after complaint. And when yet he leaves thee not, but again and again returns, as some read it, after some intermission, and shews himself terrible to thee day after day, night after night, yet do thou look in like manner 'again and again towards his holy temple,' as Jonah did, chap. ii. 4. And when he begins to bring in new sins, new indictments against thee, as it is in the 17th verse, 'Thou renewest thy witnesses;' and when thou thoughtest he had done with thee, he fetcheth new rods forth, and enters into new quarrels and reckonings long since past and forgotten, as it is in the same verse, 'changes and war against me,' vicissitudes and armies of disquietments; and when one army is overcome, new appear in the field;—then fall thou down upon thy knees, and say as Job at last doth, chap. vii. 20, 'I have sinned,' I have sinned, 'what shall I do unto thee?' what shall I do unto thee? 'O thou preserver'—and not the destroyer—'of men:' these and these abominations I have done, and I cannot now undo them; and what shall I do to obtain thy favour? Alas! nothing that can satisfy him; only 'confess thy sins, accept thy punishment,' Lev. xxvi. 41. Go and strip thyself therefore, and with all submission present a naked back to him; and though every stroke fetcheth not blood only, but well-nigh thy soul away, yet complain thou not one whit of him; 'put thy mouth in the dust,' Lam. iii. 29, 30. Be still, not a word; but only such as whereby thou utterest thy complaints, and dost acknowledge thine own deservedness of ten thousand times more; and say, as Mic. vii. 9, 'I will bear thine indignation patiently, for I have sinned against thee.' Bear witness still to every stroke, that it is not only just, but also 'less than thou hast deserved,' Ezra ix. 13; and that it is 'his mercy thou art not consumed' and cut off by every blow; and the heavier he lays on, struggle thou not, he will let thee down the sooner. The higher he lifts up his hand to strike, the lower let thy soul fall down: 'humble yourselves under his mighty hand;' and still kiss the rod when he hath done.

And then 'take up words' of pleading for thyself,—it is for thy life,—desiring him to remember what he hath been ever thinking of, even from everlasting, 'thoughts of peace' and mercy to us-ward, and 'the number of them cannot be told,' as David says, Ps. xl. 5; which he hath been ever thinking of, and with the greatest of delights, as one that was in his bosom, and was his counsellor, (his Son,) tells us, Prov. viii. 31. And plead thou as David and other saints of God have done. What are now become of all these thy thoughts of mercy? Are they restrained? Isa. lxiii. 16. What! are all now on the sudden forgotten, Ps. lxxvii. 9, laid aside, which thou hast been thinking on so long? Hast thou forgotten thine old and ancient delights? Ask him if he hath forgotten his own name,—to be gracious and abundant in kindness,—it is his name. Say, Did the very intent of shewing mercy so infinitely beforehand possess thee with delights, and now, when thou shouldst come to put it in execution, and hast so fair an opportunity of doing it, to a soul as full of misery, the object of mercy, as ever, hast thou now no heart, no mind to it? And withal, say that thou hast notice given thee of an infinite and all-sufficient righteousness in his Son, laid up in him, and that by his own procurement, whereof his Son never had, nor can have any need himself, being God blessed for ever; and for whom was it then appointed but for the sons of man, those who are weary, wounded, sick, broken, lost? These his Son hath put into his will, Heb. ix. 16, who still lives to be his own executor. And say further also to him that it is come to thine

ears that his Spirit is the 'Comforter,' a 'God of comforts,' and that his Son hath bought them all, his whole shop, and all his cordials, and all his skill, 'and is anointed with this Spirit,' Isa. lxi. 1–3, on purpose to pour him forth into the hearts of those that are wounded and sick and broken; and 'the whole they have no need of them.'

If it be said unto thee, Yea, but thou art most unworthy; answer, But he professeth to 'love freely,' Hos. xiv. 4. If the greatness of thy sins be objected against thee, plead thou again that 'plenteous redemption is with him,' Psalm cxxx. 7; and if thou hast not enough to pardon me, say, I am content to go without. If thou art ungodly, say that thou believest 'on him that justifieth the ungodly,' Rom. iv. 5. If he puts thee off, as Christ a while did the woman of Canaan, and says he hath no need of thee; say, that thou hast need of him, and canst no longer live without him; for 'in his favour is thy life,' and that without it thou art undone. If he seems to rebuke thee, that how darest thou press thus to him who is 'the high and lofty One;' a sinful man to him 'whose name is Holy;' say, thou hast heard himself say, 'Thus saith that high and lofty One, whose name is Holy, that he dwells with him that is of a contrite spirit, to revive the heart of the humble,' Isa. lvii. 15. And be further bold to tell him that there are but a few in the world that do seek him, and if he should turn any away that do, he would have fewer; for who would fear him, if there were not 'mercy in him and plenteous redemption?' Psalm cxxx. 7.

If still he doth pursue thee, and his wrath lies heavy on thee, ask him what it is he aims at? Is it to have the victory, and 'overcome when he judgeth?' as Rom. iii. 4: which David also knew when he humbled himself, Psalm li. 4. Freely tell him that thou art willing to give it him, to yield to him, to stand out with him in nothing; but art content to submit to his commanding will in all things, and to his condemning will also, if so he pleaseth: and that it shall be just, as David there acknowledgeth, if he doth condemn thee; and justify thou him, whilst he is condemning thee; and say that at the latter day he shall need no other judge against thee than thyself. Only beseech him to consider what honour it will be to him to 'pursue dry stubble,' and to 'break a poor dried leaf,' Job xiii. 25, that crumbleth under his fingers, if he doth but touch it, as Job pleads; to 'break a reed' that is broken already, Matt. xii. 20. Say, thou art not a fit match for him; and he hath said, 'He will not contend for ever,' Isa. lvii. 16, especially when he sees any to lay down the weapons, as thou art content to do.

Or is it, ask him, that he aims to have glory out of thy eternal condemnation in hell? Tell him it is true, he may; and that this is some comfort to thee, that he may have glory out of thy death and destruction, who never yet had it out of thy life: but yet desire him to consider this before he thrusts his sword into thee, that he did first sheathe it in his Son's bowels, and that he may shew as much power in overcoming his wrath as in venting of it; yea, and have also greater glory thereby. For, plead that thou art never able to satisfy him, though he should throw thee down to hell. He may cast thee into prison, but thou canst never pay the debt: and 'what profit therefore will be in my blood?' Psalm xxx. 9; and therefore, if satisfaction to his justice be his end, he might better accept that which his Son made him, and so he shall be sure to be no loser by thee: and thereby not only receive the glory of his justice, but shew the riches of his grace and mercy also, and so double the revenue of his glory in thee.

Or is it, Lord, that thou aimest to have more obedience from me than

heretofore thou hast had? Plead, that this is the way at present to disable thee for service, for that, while thou sufferest his terrors, thou art as 'one among the dead,' listless not to his business only, but to all things else; 'distracted with terrors,' as Heman pleads, Psalm lxxxviii. 15, so as the powers and forces of thy soul are scattered and dissolved, and cannot intend and attend upon their duty. And besides this distraction in thy spirit, plead, that it 'consumes thy strength' also, 'dries up thy bones and moisture,' as David also often complaineth, and makes an argument of it, as Psalm xxxix. 10–13, 'Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thy hand. When thou rebukest man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away as a moth: O therefore spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen.' And withal put him in mind, that if he should go on thus to deal with thee, as thou shouldest not be able to do him *much* service, so nor to do it *long*. For it will cut short my days, say. This David pleadeth, Psalm lxxxix. 46, 47, compared with the 39th Psalm, ver. 12, 'How long, Lord? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? Shall thy wrath burn like fire? Remember how short my time is.' As if he should have said, I have but a little time here allotted me in the world, though none of it be shortened. And further tell him, that for that little time thou hast to live, the more joy thou hast, the more service thou shalt be able for to do him; and to go about his work more lively, and more strongly,—for 'the joy of the Lord is our strength,' Neh. viii. 10,—and more acceptably also, for 'thou lovest a cheerful giver,' 2 Cor. ix. 7. And therefore entreat him to restore thee to the joy of his salvation, so shalt thou be able to do him more service in a week than in a year now; long trouble of mind being as long sicknesses, which make all thy performances weak; and it is for his disadvantage to have his servants lie long sick upon his hands.

And if it be objected against thee, that if thou shouldest be trusted with much assurance thou wouldst abuse it, and turn it into wantonness; reply, that if he pleaseth he can prevent it, by preparing thy heart aforehand for these cordials, so as they shall work most kindly on thee; by writing a law of love towards him in thy heart, which when his love shed abroad shall join with, will work most strongly; and one grain of it hath more force to purge out sin, to constrain and strengthen to obedience, than a pound of terrors. And say, that though thou hast indeed a stubborn and self-loving heart, yet he can make his loving-kindness overcome it, for it is 'stronger than death,' Cant. viii. 6. Say thou hast love in thee, (which runs out enough to other things,) if he would be pleased to win it to himself. Suggest how that that soul mentioned Isa. lvii. had as stout and stubborn a heart as thou, and 'went on frowardly,' notwithstanding all thy terrors: and yet (O Lord!) thou tookest another course with him, and didst 'heal him' again, and that by 'comforts,' ('I will heal him,' says God there, 'and restore comforts unto him,' ver. 18,) and that so, if he please, he may deal with thee.

And if light and mercy yet comes not, but still God seems as it were to cast thee off; then call to mind if ever thou hast had any true communion with him, and thereupon begin to challenge him. So doth the church, Isa. lxiii. 16, when in thy case; when 'his mercies were restrained' to her, she says, yet 'doubtless thou art my father;' she saw God was angry, 'her heart hard,' ver. 17, yet she thought she should know him: 'doubtless he is my father; and where is thy zeal, the sounding of thy bowels?' So challenge him thou, upon that old acquaintance thou hast had and held with him in former times. Say, 'doubtless thou art my father and my husband,' how

strange soever thou carriest thyself now towards me; for dost thou not remember what hath been between me and thee in prayer, in such a chamber, at such a time? Hast thou never a piece of a broken ring between him and thee, no love-passage, no love-token, that could not pass between him and any whom he had not 'betrothed himself unto in kindness?' Hosea ii. 19. Produce it at such a time as this. And if thou shouldest discern no grace in thee thyself, yet desire him to look into thy heart; and be bold to inquire of him if he can see nothing there which himself wrote, never to be blotted out; if there be not some spark of love to him and his fear which himself put there; and ask him if he knows his own hand. And for thy comfort know, that when thou canst not read it, thy graces being much blurred, yet he can read his own hand at any time, and will not deny it.

Thou mayest be yet bolder. Yea, desire him to look into his own heart, and therein to view the idea he had of thee, and those secret ancient thoughts he bore towards thee, from all eternity. And if at first he seems yet silent at it, then desire him to look upon thee again, and ask him if he doth not know thee, and if he hath not known and taken thee for his from everlasting, and engraven thee on the palms of his hands and table of his heart, with such deep and lasting letters of loving-kindness as are not as yet, yea, which will not for ever be blotted out. Tell him thou darest refer thyself wholly to what passed between him and his Son concerning thee, and let his own heart cast it. Appeal to Christ as thy surety, and a witness thereof for thee, who was privy to all his counsel, whether thou art not one of those he gave unto him, with a charge to redeem and save. And desire him to look into Christ's heart also, if thy name be not written there with his own hand; and if that Christ did not bear thy name written upon his heart, as the high priest did the names of all the tribes, when he hung upon the cross, and when he ascended into the holy of holies. Thus Habakkuk, putting up a prayer in the name of the church, hath taught us to plead, chap. i. 12, O Lord, 'art not thou from everlasting my God, and mine Holy One?' It was a bold question; yet God dislikes it not, but approves it, and presently assents to it in a gracious answer to their hearts ere they went any further; for their next words, and those abruptly spoken, by reason of a sudden answer, are an assurance of this, 'We shall not die.' God being put thus to it, and his own thoughts being spoken, could not deny it; he acknowledgeth it was true. And thus whilst thou mayest be a-speaking blindfold, as it were, casting anchor in the dark, yet speaking his very heart, he haply may own thee, and fall upon thy neck and kiss thee.

And if yet, after continual praying thus, thou findest still no comfort, no answer from him, but he seems rather even to shut thy very prayers out, as Ps. xxii. 2, 3, then expostulate, as David doth, Ps. lxxx. 4, 'Why shuttest thou out our prayers, and wilt not hear us pray?' For, alas! thought he, we have nothing else to help us in the time of need but prayer; and if prayer will do no good, I am undone, say.

And if through all these discouragements thy condition prove worse and worse, so as thou canst not pray, but art struck dumb when thou comest into his presence, as David, Ps. lxxvii. 4, 'I am so troubled I cannot speak,' then fall a-making signs when thou canst not speak; groan, sigh, sob, 'chatter,' as Hezekiah did; bemoan thyself for thine own unworthiness, and desire Christ to speak thy requests for thee, and God to hear him for thee. Christ he is 'an advocate with the Father,' 1 John ii. 2, and pleads no bad case, nor was ever cast in any suit he pleaded.

And if still, haply, after many years, he owns thee not, but it grows darker

and darker, suppose even till thy death approacheth, or to such extremities that he seems to thee to cast thee off for ever, so as thy distress boils up to such thoughts as these, that there is no other remedy but thou and he must part; then in the midst and depths of such sad fears and apprehensions, down upon thy knees once more; and notwithstanding fall thou a-blessing him for all those glorious excellencies of holiness, kindness, grace, wisdom, &c., which are in him, the beauty of which first took thy heart and made thee enamoured with him, though thou shouldst be never like to be the better for them. Bless him for all the mercy he shews to others, by which they have occasion to magnify him, though thou shouldst be found unworthy. Bless him and those who shall for ever live with him, who do stand about him, and see his face, and enjoy him ever. What sins thou thinkest thou shalt be condemned for by him, condemn thyself for first, and still ask forgiveness of them. What service thou hast any way done him, which he had any glory by, get thy heart to say thou repentest not of it, but art glad of all done for him, and wishest it had been better. What mercies thou hast tasted of from him, confess thyself unworthy of, and thank him though thou shouldst never partake of any more. Such dispositions as these, in such extremities, do often appear in the hearts of God's children. And desire him that he would but preserve good thoughts of him in thee, that thou mayest not blaspheme him. And when thou art a-going, a-sinking into hell in thine own apprehensions, see if he calls thee not back again.

See what himself saith, Jer. xxxi. 18–20, 'Ephraim is my son,' my dear son, 'my pleasant son,' as he says there, and yet he began to 'speak against him' as bitter sharp words as ever he hath done against thee, and took him up severely, and looked sternly on him, as if he had meant never to have had mercy on him: upon which Ephraim falls a-crying, being thus snibbed, and 'a-bemoaning himself,' as I have taught thee to do; and being yoked as thou art, to tame him, he acknowledgeth it was justly done, having been 'a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke;' and Ephraim began to be ashamed, confounded, not able to look up, for sinning against him, and seeks after repentance, and that from him without whose help he was not able to turn to him, 'Turn thou me, and I shall be turned;' and to challenge him and his eternal love, 'Thou art the Lord my God.' Well, says God, though it be 'long' since 'I spake against him,' and I have suffered him long to lie thus plunged in misery, 'yet I remember him still;' his tears, his sighs, will never out of my mind; and though he thinks that I had forgotten him, yet I remember him, and 'my bowels are troubled for him,' as much and more than he is for himself; and I can forbear no longer, 'I will surely have mercy on him.' And should he have damned him, his bowels would have been troubled for him indeed, all his days.

DIRECTION X.

The tenth and last direction is, that having done all this, you would not rest in ease, but healing: not in ease of conscience, but in healing of conscience. This I ground upon Isa. lvii. 17, 18. What was the true issue of that his trouble there, whom God contended with? It was healing and guiding: 'I will guide him, and I will heal him.'

You that are troubled in mind, think not your estates to be good simply because you begin to cease to be troubled, but only then when the issue of your trouble is healing your spirits, by some sound ground of comfort; and when guidance in God's ways, and more close walking with God, is the issue of it. For God may slack the cords and take you off the rack when yet he

hath not pardoned you. A traitor who was cast into the dungeon, and had many irons on him, may be let out of the dungeon, and have his irons taken off, and have the liberty of the Tower, and walk abroad again, with his keeper with him, and yet not have his pardon: nay, usually before execution they use to take the irons off, and let them have more freedom. Thus it is with many. I thank God, says one, I have had much trouble of mind, distress of conscience, such and such sins terrified me, and I could not sleep for them: but now I am well again, and now they do not trouble me. Yea, but is this all? Thou hast cause to fear that thy irons are but taken off against execution. It is with men in point of trouble of mind in the guilt of sin, as in the power of it; in justification as in sanctification. A man who hath had a strong lust stirring in him, if he hath gone a year or two, and findeth it not to stir, he therefore thinks he is utterly freed from it, which yet may be but a restraint of it, not killing of it; a cessation, not mortification. So it is often in this trouble of mind, which ariseth from the guilt of sin: because a man finds not those doubts, and fears, and terrors in his heart which he had wont, therefore presently he thinks all is well, whenas it may be but merely a truce, not a peace; a laying down of arms only for a while, to make greater preparation against the soul afterwards; a reprieval and a little enlargement in prison, not a pardon, if this be all the issue of it.

That you may further conceive the meaning of this: in one that is God's child, and in a wicked man, though both may be and are troubled in mind and conscience, yet there is a main difference, both in the main cause of their trouble, and also in the issue and removal of their trouble. A wicked man's trouble is for the anguish and present smart he feels in sin, and in God's wrath lashing his conscience, and out of fears that his sin will not be pardoned, but that he shall endure these tortures for ever in hell. So it was in Judas, Cain, and many others. But a godly man's trouble, though it hath often all this in it, yet the chiefest of his trouble is a further thing: it is not only the smart, the sting of sin, but also the filth, the foulness, the offence of it done to God, that wounds him; for he hath a heart after God's heart, and therefore looks on sin with the same kind of eye that God doth; and as God accounts the offence done to him the greatest evil in sin, so doth a godly heart also. It is not the sting of this serpent only, but the poison of it that disquiets him; neither is it only the want of pardon of sin, and the fear of God's everlasting wrath, which mainly troubleth him, but the want of God's favour, the parting with him whom he sees so excellent and glorious, the want of seeing his face. His desire is to live in his sight, and to have God to be his God. Now such as the wound is, such also is the remedy. Therefore the one being but troubled with the sting, the smart of sin, pull but that sting out, take that load off, and he is well enough, as jocund, as pleasant as ever; it being present ease that he seeks, and to that end confesseth his sin, and doth anything for the present to come out of it; as Pharaoh, Exod. x. 17, 'Take away this death only:' or at the utmost, his aim is but pardon of sin and peace with God, that he may be free from the fears of undergoing that for ever, the earnest whereof he feels in his conscience now. And hence therefore the remedies they often have recourse unto are suitable; they are but like rattles to still children with: they run to merry company and to music, &c., as Cain fell a-building cities, and so they put off the terrors of their consciences. It is ease they seek, and no more. Or they run to a formal performance of duties; even as poor souls under Popery, when they were stung by the friars' sermons, they set them penances and good deeds to be done, which stilled them a while; and for

them they thought they should have pardon. So men run now to holy duties, but with the same opinion that they did then, as bribes for a pardon. 'What shall I give,' says he in Micah, 'for the sin of my soul?' chap. vi. 7.

But now the wound of God's child being deeper,—not the sting of sin only, but the poison of it; not the smart, but the offence done to God; nor the fear of his wrath, but want of his favour,—therefore accordingly ease from those terrors pacifies not him. No; not simply peace with God will content him, or a pardon. He says not only, 'Oh, miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this death' only? but 'who shall deliver me from this body of death?' If news were brought him that God would pardon him, and not call him to reckoning for any sin, and no more were spoken to his conscience, he would still be troubled till he had assurance of his good-will also. If it were said, God will indeed pardon thee, but he will never love thee as he did, he will not look on thee, thou must not come into his sight; this would grieve the soul more than the other would content it, and he would be everlastingly troubled. I may allude to that which Absalom said in compliment of his father, when he was banished from him, to express the true desire and greatest trouble of a soul in this case, as you have it, 2 Sam. xiv. 32. Absalom was pardoned the fault, but it contented him not: 'Let me see his face, or let him kill me.' So it is with a poor soul. Ease, pardon, knocking off his bolts, content him not till he enjoys communion with God, till he sees his face in his ordinances. Ps. xxiv. 6, 'This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face'—that is, this is the mark, the *genius*, the disposition of that generation. This you may see in David, when his conscience was wounded for that great sin. What was it troubled him? Not the want of pardon of sins, for the prophet told him God had pardoned him; not the mere stings of conscience and ache of his broken bones; but that 'against thee, thee, have I sinned,' so as ease could not satisfy him. But further, ver. 10, 'Create in me a clean spirit,'—which he speaks because, having chewed the cud of that unclean act, he had left a soil in his fancy,—'and renew a right spirit within me:' Oh, give me grace and truth of heart to thee; and, oh, let me live in thy presence, and see thee, and have acquaintance with thee, ver. 11. The want of this was it that troubled him, which till he had obtained, he could never be at quiet; for he sought not ease or pardon only, but healing of his conscience by the favour of God, and his love shed abroad. So as take heed of resting in ease; as, if your hearts be right, you will not,—you will wait till the 'Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings,' Mal. iv. 2. Are you now in darkness, full of terrors and God's wrath? You will not rest till that darkness be expelled by the arising of the light of the Sun of righteousness on you, and revealing God's face in the face of Jesus Christ, till his righteousness be conveyed to your hearts by some of his wings,—by some promise, by some ordinance of his. For the wound being the unrighteousness of sin, nothing but Christ's righteousness will heal it: the wound being the want of God's favour, and of the evidence of his being your God, the want of his face and good-will, nothing but the revealing and arising of this in your hearts will heal you. For look what the wound is, such is the plaster. And, indeed, this only heals; for though by other means the sore may be skinned over, and ease gotten, yet it will break forth again. So Isa. lvii. 17, 18, 'I will heal him.' And how? 'By restoring comforts to him.' 'Restore to me the joy of thy salvation,' says David, 'that the bones that thou hast broken may rejoice.' And how heals he him? 'I create the fruit of the lips, Peace.' He doth it by some promise or other. If the want of the sense of communion with God,

and absence from him, disquiets a man, then the heart rests not till it hath found its well-beloved, Cant. iii. 1–5. If you have doubts that no grace is in thy heart, then the heart rests not till some grace in truth be evidenced, and some such promise made to some grace brought home. Still look what the trouble is, such also must the plaster be, and then it is healing. Wert ever in the dungeon? What was it freed thee? Was it Christ's righteousness laid hold on, God's face revealed, thine own grace with some promise brought home to thy heart, that came with a commission to deliver thee? Then it is right; otherwise thy bolts may be knocked off, and this but against thy execution.

SECTION II.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God, &c.—ISA. L. 10.

SOME gleanings there yet remain of this text, which I thought good to bind up into one sheaf, and thresh out at this time.

The *second** doctrine is: That though it may befall one that fears God to walk in darkness, yet but to a few. He says, 'Who is among you?' he singleth such out of a crowd. If simply he had spoken of those that fear God and obey him, without this limitation added, 'and walk in darkness,' he might well have spoken thus sparingly, 'Who is among you?' For to the wicked he says, 'All you that kindle a fire,' &c.; for there are but a few that fear God in comparison of them. If he had spoken of those that fear God, and have 'been in darkness' for some little while, haply some few days among many, there are yet fewer; for there are that walk in the light of God's countenance to their death, and never knew what terror of conscience means. But when he shall speak of those that 'fear God and walk in darkness,' and suffer terrors from their youth, as Heman did, such a one is one of a thousand. Of such a one he says, 'Who is among you?' Few have experience of such a condition. Job had friends who certainly were godly,—for Job was to pray for them, and God said he would hear Job for them, and they, as is likely, knew many godly men besides Job,—yet when this condition of darkness befell Job, it was so strange a trial to them, that they thought him therefore a hypocrite, as never having themselves felt or heard of the like in others. When Christ was to go into his agony, he would not have many of his apostles so much as be by him to be witnesses of it, much less to feel the like; he takes but two or three. The reasons are:—

Reason 1.—Because, though all God's people are *fighting men* and men of valour, yet he hath but a few *champions*,—as David, though he had many soldiers, yet but few worthies,—and therefore calls but a few out to fight single combats with Satan and his wrath; though he exerciseth them all in lighter skirmishes, yet not to fight such bloody battles. 'Seest thou not my servant Job? there is none like him.' Him God will venture into the field; but others his friends he will not.

Reason 2.—As he hath few champions able and fit for such an encounter, so he hath variety of other temptations to exercise his withal. He hath poverty and ill report, imprisonment and cruel mockings, loss of goods, crosses in friends; and some have enough to struggle under one of these; and there is no temptation but must befall some, and seldom all befall one.

* The first being that stated in p. 237, and discussed in the former Part.—ED.

Some spirits are so weak, as they would faint and not be able to sustain themselves; and God never suffers any to be 'tempted above what they are able,' 1 Cor. x. 13. Some men's bodies are weak, and if God should 'rebuke them long for sin,' they would be brought to nothing; and he 'remembers they are flesh, and stirs not up all his wrath,' as David says: 'Oh, suffer me to recover strength!' Some men God hath present use of in their callings and employments, which if they were distracted, as Heman was, with terrors continually, they were unfit for.

Reason 3.—God afflicts in this kind but in case of extremity usually; when he meets with a very froward heart, and stout, proud spirit, a knotty piece, Isa. lvii. 17. If lesser crosses would do it, he would not fetch out the great rod. If a rod will 'thresh out the cummin,' he useth not to 'turn the wheel over it,' nor take a flail to do it, Isa. xxviii. 27. Now lesser afflictions work with the most of his, through his blessing; mercies work, disgrace works, poverty works, and 'he doth not willingly afflict,' Lam. iii. 33, and therefore not unnecessarily; he puts not men into the dungeon for every fault, and therefore there are few long exercised this way.

Use 1.—Think not therefore thou hast not true grace, because thou wert never terrified as some have been. As some have true faith and sound peace who yet never tasted of 'joy unspeakable and glorious,' so some have sound humiliation who never knew terrors of conscience. If thou seest sin the greatest misery, Christ the greatest good, thou art humbled.

Use 2.—You see we may often preach such things which do yet concern but a few in a congregation, and yet we are to preach them. There are but a few walk long in darkness, yet to such Christ doth preach. Yea, and for such doth God 'give gifts, the tongue of the learned.' God often gives a pastor after his own heart for a few: Jer. iii. 15, 'Take one or two of a city,' &c., 'and I will give them pastors after my heart;' much more are many sermons often preached but to a few. So even by Christ himself, as he says, Luke iv. 26, 'There were many widows,' &c., 'but unto none was Elias sent but unto her at Sarepta;' and many lepers, but 'unto none was Elias sent but unto Naaman.' So says Christ, 'I am sent but to a few;' and therefore, as we must not defraud one poor soul of its portion because none else partake of it, so the rest are not to think much, but, as in a dole, stay till their portion come; and if any one poor soul hath had its estate discovered, all the rest are to be thankful.

Use 3.—See some reason why some in distress of mind complain that none ever were in the like condition; thus they are apt to do. So the church, Lam. i. 12. The reason is because few are so troubled, and haply they never knew any: but yet some are and have been in the like; for, 1 Cor. x. 13, 'no temptation befalls but is common to man.'

Doct. 3.—That those few in congregations that walk in darkness, and yet fear and obey him, God and Christ hath an especial eye unto and care of; you see he singles them out, as it were, from all the rest, 'Who is among you?' Isa. lxvi. 2, 'All these things have my hand made; but to this man will I look, that is poor and broken, and trembleth at my word;' that is, though all things and persons else in the world be my creatures, and so I have a care of them all, yet he seems to overlook all else, and 'to him will I look,' &c., as if there were none else in the church.

Reason 1.—The first reason is, because it is the office of Christ so to do. The Spirit is upon him on purpose, Isa. lxi. 1–3, 'to open the prison to them that are bound,' shut up in this dungeon; 'to appoint to them that mourn beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, garments of praise for

the spirit of heaviness.' He is the physician, and hath undertaken the cure, Matt. ix. 12. And whom should the physician have an eye to but the sick, and the most sick, as those are that cannot find their sins forgiven? Isa. xxxiii. 14. He is the shepherd, Isa. xl. 11, and will take care of all his sheep, 'knows them by name.' But of whom especially? The lambs that are weak, young Christians. 'He will gather them with his arms, and gently lead the ewes with young;' that are travailing and bringing forth, as those under terrors are. He will not over-drive them; for God hath given him charge 'he should lose none of them.' He is 'that good shepherd' that will, as he hath promised, Ezek. xxxiv. 16, 'seek out that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and bind up that which is broken, and strengthen that which was sick.' He names all casualties that befall them. because he helps in all miseries; yea, and, ver. 12, after they have been wildered 'in a cloudy and dark day,' and walked in darkness long, he will 'find them out and deliver them,' as his promise there is.

Reason 2.—If his office did not move him to it, his love would; for he is a merciful and a pitiful high priest, Heb. iv. 15, and was 'in all points tempted as we are;' and especially in agony of spirit. Therein he drank deepest of any, and therefore is fitted to pity us therein most; and the greatlier any is troubled, the more he is touched. Isa. lxiii. 9, 'In all your afflictions he is afflicted;' and, Jer. xxxi. 20, 'Since I spake against him, I remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him.' When a child is sick, the mother is more troubled and careful about it, and her eye and mind more upon it, than on all the house besides.

Use 1.—The use is, to meet with that conceit that befalls all that are in darkness: they think that of all men else, God regards not them. Sion said, 'God hath forgotten me,' Isa. xlix. 14. So David, 'God hath forgotten to be merciful.' Because they find their hearts hard to God, they think that his is so to them: because they can find no love in their hearts to God, they think he bears none to them. But you see Christ especially inquires for such, and overlooks all others else. God hath 'graven thee on the palms of his hands;' every sigh of thine goes to his bowels. Isa. lvii. 15, 'I dwell with him that is broken, to revive his spirit.' God is nigh him.

Use 2.—Are God's eyes upon us more when we are in trouble of spirit than on any other? Then let our eyes be upon him: 'We cannot tell what to do, but our eyes are towards thee.' Let our eyes be towards him for help, as of those that looked on the brazen serpent: let our eyes be towards him for service, 'as the eyes of handmaidens are on their mistress;' to look not to men, not to credit, but to have our eyes on God in all we do, as if there were none else in the world to approve ourselves unto.

Doct. 4.—In that when he speaks of those his children that are in darkness, he chooseth rather to describe them by fear and obedience, than by any other grace; observe, That when the children of God are under terrors, the most eminent grace that doth appear in them is fearfulness to offend God, and willingness to obey him. Other graces may be stirred, but these are most eminent, and therefore he mentioneth these for their comfort.

Explication.—First, for explication. Know that several occasions draw out several graces. When the sunshine of God's favour melts the heart, then love and obedience, thence proceeding, are most eminent, and also godly sorrow. So Mary wept much, loved much, for 'much was forgiven her;' her heart was full of assurance. On the contrary, when the sense of God's love is withdrawn, and fears and terrors shed abroad in the heart, then fear and obedience shew and discover themselves. Therefore, Isa. lxvi. 2, 'He that

is poor and contrite, and trembleth at the word,' are joined; trembleth at every command and threatening, is fearful to transgress: and so those in that estate do find. The reason is:—

Reason.—Because graces, and affections in which graces are seated, stir more or less in us according as their objects are, and our apprehensions of them. Now therefore, when the soul is possessed most with displeasure for sin, and apprehensions of wrath, then it feareth most, and then fear works accordingly, against that which may displease. Hence the Apostle: seeing 'our God is a consuming fire,' Heb. xii. 29, 'let us serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear;' therefore when we see him so, we are to suspect our hearts most, if we be not more fearful of offending him, and obey him.

Use 1.—The first use is of trial, whether thou art a child under wrath: if thou fearest more, and if that fear produceth obedience. As 'Christ learned obedience by what he suffered,' so wilt also thou, if thou hast his spirit.

Use 2.—The second use is, to exercise graces still in their seasons: 'When thou art afflicted, pray; when joyful, sing psalms,' James v. 13; when filled with assurance, then 'mourn and be confounded,' Ezek. xvi. 63.

A CHILD OF DARKNESS WALKING IN LIGHT.

Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow.—ISA. L. 11.

LET us now come to the opposite state, of wicked men, who are said here to 'walk in the light of their own fire,' &c.

All the difficulty lies in opening what is meant by their *own fire*, and what is meant by *walking in the light of it;* which is opposed here to *walking in darkness*, and to *trusting on the name of the Lord*—namely, Christ's rightness, as I said before. To this purpose you must remember, that his scope is to shew the differing props and stays for justification and comfort, which a godly man hath, and a natural man.

The stay and comfort of a godly man's soul lies in the light of God's countenance, which when he wanteth, he is in darkness, though he hath never so many outward comforts. The stay, comfort, and prop of his faith for justification in that estate, when he sees no righteousness in himself, is the name of the Lord Jesus Christ our righteousness.

Oppositely therefore, by the *fire*, and the *light of their fire* which wicked men are said to walk in, two things must be meant:—

I. Their *own natural righteousness* which they have by nature, and in the state of nature, and the sparks and acts thereof; this they trust to, and neglect the name of the Lord, and the righteousness of justification and of the new creature.

II. The *light of outward comforts* from the creatures, which in this world they enjoy, and the sparkling pleasures thereof which they walk in, and content themselves with, neglecting communion with God, being estranged from the life of God, and living without him in the world. So as the opposition strongly carries it, that both these should be meant by their fire here; and all interpreters give the first interpetation of it, and I have added this second to make the sense complete.

I. How that by fire of their own kindling, their own righteousness without Christ, such as the Pharisees had, and Paul had before conversion, should be meant, we must consider that he, speaking here to the Jews, alludeth to the types of the old law, which they were acquainted with. Wherein—

1. *Fire*, you know, was it they offered their sacrifices with, typifying out, as Mark ix. 49, our inward habitual grace and righteousness, whereby we offer up ourselves and our service as a 'living sacrifice to God,' Rom. xii. 1.

2. When they offered incense or sacrifice acceptable to God, they were not to offer it with common fire, which is ordinary in the world in their chimneys and kitchens, which was kindled by themselves by sparks out of stones, or from things here below; but it was to be fire from heaven, and taken from the altar, (so Lev. ix. 24,) which was kept continually burning, and therefore when a new altar was made, 'fire came from heaven, 2 Chron. vii. 3; and the high priest was to take fire off the altar, whenever he offered incense, Lev. xvi. 12. And therefore when Nadab and Abihu offered 'common fire of their own kindling,' Lev. x. 1, they were consumed for thinking to please God with it. Now all these things fell out in types to them. For answerably by fire of their own kindling is meant the common righteousness of civility and natural devotion, which was by nature in some of the heathen, Rom. ii. 14, found even in their chimneys; which also the Jews performed, both by the common help of nature, custom, and education, by the strength of natural principles, of conscience enlightened by the law, and self-love improved; all which, thus coming but from nature not renewed by grace, is said to be of their own kindling: whereby yet they thought to please God, and rested in it, as a sacrifice well-pleasing to him; as Nadab and Abihu did. Whereas the righteousness they should have offered up to God should have been that from heaven, the righteousness of Christ apprehended by faith, and a new work of grace, as fire from off that altar Christ, changing their hearts, and making them new creatures, renewing them into the same image of holiness which was in him; which as it adds to what is in nature, and grows not there, so differs as much from that goodness of nature you bring into the world, or which hath been wrought in you by education, as the fire and light of the sun in heaven doth from common fire; or the light of a glow-worm from that of the sun.

Now because the Jews rested in such an outward conformity to the law of their own working, therefore they are said, Rom. x. 3, 'to establish their own righteousness,' being ignorant of both these righteousnesses—Christ's righteousness, which is the fire from heaven, and the righteousness of regeneration, to change their natures, which is the fire off the altar. Nicodemus was ignorant of both, and so had lain down in sorrow as his forefathers did, if Christ had not changed him and begotten him again.

To this end you may further consider, that in men's hearts there are, (to use the language of the metaphor here,) though they be stony unto God, yet *some sparks of fire*, which may be struck out of them by the word, by education, by enlightening of the conscience, and by working upon self-love in men: and the sparks of this fire are those outward acts of righteousness which arise and spring from self-love and natural conscience, which die as sparks and remain not; which the true righteousness of regeneration is said to do, 2 Cor. xii. 9, and John iii. 6. And the light of this fire, which carnal men, not born again, content themselves with, is that 'excusing' which natural conscience, upon the performing any outward act of just dealing, hath in such men's hearts, mentioned Rom. ii. 15.

And the walking in the light of this fire is resting therein all their days, not endeavouring to have their hearts changed, and to get a new principle of grace, and of love to God fetched from Christ, as the spring of all.

Uses.

Use 1.—The first use is, seeing so many offer up but common fire to God, it is good you examine whether that righteousness you think to please God with be any more than fire of your own kindling.

First, That righteousness which is kindled in thy heart, and blazeth in thy life, whence was it first enkindled? examine the original of it. Was it kindled in thee by fire from heaven? that is, by the Holy Ghost coming down in God's ordinances on thee as fire, burning up thy lusts, melting thy heart, dissolving the works of the devil, enkindling sparks of true love to God, zeal for his glory, which are above the reach of man's natural ability. Or is it no more than that, whereas every man hath some sparks of ingenuity and honesty towards others, and of sobriety, and of devotion to a deity, raked up in the ashes of corrupt nature,—for even the heathen had 'the law written in their hearts,' Rom. ii. 14,—which sparks thou, living in the church, where civility and religion is professed, civil education, natural wisdom, and the accusing of natural conscience enlightened, have blown up to some blaze, to some just dealing, common care of serving God? Yet know that if there be no other principle, nor no more, it is but fire of your own kindling, and you will lie down in sorrow.

Secondly, Examine what duties are especially the fuel of that fire in thee. In what duties is that righteousness thou thinkest thou pleasest God with chiefly spent and exercised? Are they principally the duties of the second table, of just dealing with men, and sobriety? And it may be thou bringest withal a stick or two of the first table to this fire; that is, some duties thereof, such as for thy credit thou must not omit, as coming to God's ordinances of public worship. This fuel, if there be no more, argues it is but common fire: for look into the chimneys of the heathen, thou shalt find the most of all this practised. And in that thou dost put the chiefest of thy religion in them, it is argued to be but a fire kindled of those sparks which are raked up in nature; for those common sparks which are in all men's hearts are especially those of the second table. But now, if it were a fire from heaven, then though those would not be left undone, yet the chiefest heat of thy heart would be to the duties of heaven, of the worship of God, public and private. When men practise but so much righteousness as is necessary for them to do if they will live in the world in any comfort or credit, as to be just and sober is necessary, as also to frequent God's ordinances, for the state we live in enjoins them; but when men's zeal and fervour contends also, and lives upon such duties which the world regards not, as mourning for sin, taking pains with the heart in private, between God and a man's own soul, and feeds upon heavenly things and thoughts, and is such fire as the world quencheth, it is a sign it is more than common fire.

Thirdly, In these duties common fire warms but the outward man, as that fire doth which you feel daily; it heats you not within: so common righteousness contents itself with 'bodily exercise,' a formal performance of duties, public and private; but fire from heaven heats first within, heats the heart within, as at the hearing the word: 'Did not our hearts burn within us?' say they; so it heats the heart in prayer, makes a man 'fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.'

Fourthly, Examine what bellows cherish and keep alive that fire of righteousness that is in thee, and make it flame; that is, what motives set thee a-work to do what thou dost. If worldly ends make thee abstain from sin

and to be just in thy dealings, as credit with the world and fear of disgrace, or the accusings of conscience only, or fear of hell, or hope of heaven; this is but common fire. But if love to God, the consideration of his mercies, his eternal love, and the love of Christ, zeal for his glory; if these be the bellows, the fire is heavenly. But if when thou art to be moved with such as these, they stir not thy heart, it is but common fire.

Use 2.—The second use is, to take heed of walking in the light of such fire; that is, resting in it for salvation, and contenting yourselves with it, as most in the world do, and as the Jews here did, for you will lie down in sorrow if you do.

But you will say, We do not trust in this our own righteousness, for we profess Christ, and believe in him, which, added to this, is enough.

I answer: That though you profess Christ, yet, (1.) unless you have had a light that hath discovered to you that all the righteousness you have by nature, and improved in nature, is a false righteousness, you do then as yet rest in your own righteousness, and rely not wholly on Christ. So, Phil. iii., Paul first saw all to be dross and dung, counted it loss, that he might win Christ; it implies he could not have him else. Men though they seem to take Christ's title, as many will procure the king's title for a living to make all sure, yet they keep, and stick to, and plead their own; but you must give up that first, and rely wholly on Christ, or he will not save you.

(2.) He that doth not daily, above all things, directly and immediately aim at and seek out for Christ's righteousness, and maketh it not the chiefest of his thoughts, prayers, and business, and is restless without it, rests in his own; for so when he had given up his title in his own, he mainly endeavoured after this 'to be found in Christ,' Phil. iii.

(3.) You still seek from Christ a new righteousness of sanctification also: for you will see that the common righteousness of nature and education will not please him; and Christ must be 'made sanctification to you,' 1 Cor. i. 30, as well as righteousness. Thus Nicodemus, though a civil man before, yet when he came to Christ, his old civility would not serve, without being born again and becoming a new creature. So as you must not think to make a supply or addition unto Christ with fire of your own kindling; you must have all off the altar: your moral virtues must be turned into graces, by having a new end put into them, carrying your hearts in them unto God.

II. The other interpretation which I add is, that the fire of outward comforts is also meant; which, whilst men enjoy, they go on merrily, neglecting God and Christ, and communion with him. But the soul of a believer, wanting this communion with God, is in darkness, and till he enjoys God again, can take comfort in nothing. Thus, Eccles. vii. 6, 'the laughter of the wicked' is compared to 'the crackling of thorns.'

Fire is a comfortable creature, having both heat and light in it, which serve and help against both cold and darkness, which are two of the greatest evils to the senses.

Heat is comfortable; therefore, Isa. xliv. 16, 'he warmeth himself,' saith the prophet, 'and cries, Aha!'

Light also is comfortable; for, saith Solomon, 'it is a pleasant thing to behold the sun.' Hence, therefore, fire here is put for outward comforts.

But yet what fire are they? But kitchen-fire—*ignis focalis*, as the philosopher calls it; for it is fire of their own kindling, says the text; not that purest element of fire above. God is said to be light and fire, whom the *saints* enjoy, and are refreshed with his light, and 'in it see light.'

And the resemblance this way also will strongly hold; for a kindled fire hath two things common which go to the making of it, both which together are called fire:—

First, fuel, as wood or coals, &c.; *secondly*, that element that preys upon these.

Answerably, unto those carnal pleasures and delights, which wicked men enjoy and rest in, two things are also concurrent:—

First, the object, which is as the fuel: things earthly, and of this world; *secondly*, their fiery hot and burning lusts, which prey upon, and live upon this fuel. Both which make this fire here spoken of: in both which this resemblance will hold in many regards.

(1.) Because the fuel of these fires of their lusts and comforts is base: things only here below. What is the fuel of your kitchen fires? Things digged out of the earth, dung, wood, coal; so things on earth are fuel to their desires. Their lusts are therefore called 'members upon earth,' Col. iii. 5; for all their comforts consist in, and their desires are after, earthly things, as their fair wives, children, houses, meat, drink: 'their god is their belly, and they mind earthly things,' Phil. iii. 19.

(2.) Because when this fuel is taken away the fire goes out, so do men's hearts die when outward things are taken from them. When Nabal thought David might yet come and take his goods, 'his heart died within him.' For men live in the creatures, and out of them they die.

(3.) As fire is a consuming thing, Heb. xii. 29, it leaves nothing but ashes; so are men's lusts, James iv. 3. They ask to 'consume all upon their lusts.' All the pleasures they have, nothing comes of them, nothing of the strength they get by them; they do all for themselves, and with themselves all dies.

(4.) Fire is a devouring thing; a whole world would not satisfy it, if it were let alone to burn on. And one day this whole world you see shall be burnt up by fire, as a witch for enticing men. Even such are men's desires after pleasures; unsatisfied they are: and the more fuel is laid on, the more ye may lay on; they 'enlarge their desire as the fire of hell,' Hab. ii. 5.

(5.) The pleasures which arise from the meeting and conjunction of this fuel and their lusts are but as sparks. Job calls sparks 'the sons of fire,' being engendered by it upon fuel; as pleasures are the sons of your lusts, when the object and they lie and couple together. And they are not long-lived, they are but as sparks, they die as soon as begotten; Col. ii. 22, 'perish in the using;' and are but as 'the crackling of thorns,' they soon go out.

(6.) Smoke accompanies such fires, the fuel being muddy things: so doth much sorrow their comforts, Prov. xiv. 13, and they go out and end in smoke; as in the text, 'lie down in sorrow.'

So that, put these together, both that strange fire of their own righteousness, which is from and in nature, unchanged; and the kitchen-fire of outward comforts: these are the two main hindrances that keep all wicked men from Christ, and justification through him.

That whereas the covenant of grace hath these two main promises in it:—

First, That God himself, who is the 'God of comfort,' will be an 'abundant reward,' Gen. xv. 1; and so by faith we take him to be, and are divorced from all comforts else in comparison of him. And—

Secondly, That Jesus Christ his Son is made 'the Lord our righteousness,' Jer. xxiii. 6; and therefore ere we take him to be so to us, we must be emptied of all our own righteousness by nature, that so God and Christ

might be all in all to us. And therefore, as the first and main work of grace consists both in emptying the heart, and bringing it to nothing in its own righteousness, as also in regard of all outward comforts, that so 'no flesh might rejoice in his sight;' answerably unto these two there are found two main impediments in men by nature :—

First, Because in nature they find some sparks of civil goodness, they rest in them, and take them for grace, and neglect Christ. And—

Secondly, Finding also in this world themselves to be warmed with many outward comforts, being encompassed about with sparks, they content themselves with these. Thus so long as that young man had righteousness of his own, and possessions of his own, he cared not for Christ, nor communion with him, nor righteousness from him. Well, but (says Christ here) flatter yourselves with your own righteousness, and cheer yourselves with your own sparks, and walk on; but know, 'you will lie down in sorrow,' when 'the godly shall rest in their beds,' Isa. lvii. 2. You will lie bedrid in hell; or as a woman in travail, never to rise again.

THE RETURN OF PRAYERS:

A TREATISE

WHEREIN

'HOW TO DISCERN GOD'S ANSWERS TO OUR PRAYERS'
IS BRIEFLY RESOLVED.

WITH

OBSERVATIONS UPON PSALM LXXXV. 8, CONCERNING
GOD'S SPEAKING PEACE, &c.

'I WILL WATCH TO SEE WHAT HE WILL SAY UNTO ME.'—HAB. ii. 1.

TO THE MUCH-HONOURED KNIGHT,

SIR NATHANIEL RICH.

SIR,

GOD, who from all eternity hath had an infinite mass of grace and glory lying by him to bestow upon his church, and did accordingly provide a treasury and magazine sufficient wherein to store up all, the bosom of his Son; in whom are hid riches so unsearchable, Eph. iii. 8, as cannot be told over, much less spent to all eternity.

He hath as richly (πλουσίως, Tit. iii. 6) shed his Holy Spirit on us; that we, who could never have known of anything bequeathed us, nor what to pray for as we ought, might both fully from him know all that God hath given us, and through him lay claim thereto, who maketh intercession for us, and so doth furnish us with a privy key to all that treasury, which otherwise is fast shut up to all the world.

Through which spirit of prayer and supplications thus poured forth, believers come to be at once anointed to the fellowship and execution of those three glorious offices of Christ their head. Not only of priests, by offering up their prayers as spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, but of kings, to rule with God, Hos. xi. 12; being hereby made of privy council to the King of kings, so as their counsels and desires expressed in their petitions are said to be fulfilled, Ps. xx. 4, 5, and their decrees in their prayers made, ratified, and established, Job xxii. 27, 28. Nay, further by virtue of this privilege, advanced to such height of favour, as, by their strength in prayer alone, to have power with God himself, Hos. xii. 3, 4; and not only with him, but also over him, and in their wrestlings to prevail. Yea, to command: himself hath said it, 'Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask of me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me,' Isa. xlv. 11; which so transcendent privilege of power is, by the express words of this great charter, universally extended unto all transactions of this lower part of his dominions, whether ecclesiastical, which do concern his sons,—that is, his church,—or whatever other, the more ordinary works of his hands, that belong to common providence, Matt. vi. 10.

And forasmuch as these grand affairs of this his kingdom, as future and to come, are commended to their prayers as their most proper subject about which they are to treat,—'Ask of me of things to come,'—in this respect they do become as truly prophets also, though not in so full and complete, yet in some kind of true resemblance; not by foretelling, yet by forespeaking in their prayers, things that come to pass. God, who made and upholds this world, and all things in it, by the word of his power, doth likewise rule and govern it by the precedents and prescript rules of the word of his will, Ps. xxv. 10, exactly dispensing unto men both rewards and punishments, according to the tenor of some or other of his promises and threatenings, and former like proceedings therein recorded; though with such various liberty, in respect of the particulars, that his ways remain 'unsearchable and past finding out:' that look, as he appointed in the heavens those ordinances of the sun, moon, and stars, by their light, heat, and motion, 'to rule the day and night,' to divide and cause the several seasons of the year, and all the changes and alterations that do pass over the animal and natural world; in like manner hath he stretched out that so exceeding broad expanse of his word and law, Ps. cxix. 96—to which the Psalmist doth assimilate it, Ps. xix. 1, 2, compared with Rom. x. 18—over this rational world of angels and men, and therein set his statutes and his judgments, that by the light of precepts, and their influences in rewards and punishments, they might order and direct these his creatures reasonable, and all their actions; also dispose and set out all the issues of them. And seeing his saints they are 'a people in whose hearts is his law,' and their delight is to 'meditate therein both day and night;' they daily calculating and observing the various aspects, conjunctions, and mixed influences of those innumerable precepts, promises, and threatenings which themselves and others, nations or men, stand under; and by a judgment thence resulting, Jer. viii. 7, so far as they have attained, endeavouring to frame their supplications and petitions according to God's will: hence their prayers oft full happily succeed, and beforehand do accord to those issues and events that afterwards fall out. That like as the earth comes to be just under the sun and moon in some of their conjunctions, so their desires and prayers sometimes in a direct line fall under, and subordinately concur with, God's secret purposes, and some revealed promise met in conjunction, to produce such and such effects. 'The Spirit' also herein 'helping their infirmities,' sometimes so guiding and directing them by a gracious preinstinct, though unbeknown to them, to pitch their requests upon such particulars as God hath fully purposed to bring to pass; becoming thereby, as it were, the spirit of prophecy unto them, respectively in some measure and degree.

Thus doth that great King employ his nearest servants as his under-officers and sheriffs, to serve his writs and executions upon his enemies, to execute the judgment written in his threatenings, Ps. cxlix. 9, and to accomplish his mercies written also, by suing out all the promises; to be as man-midwives, (as Hezekiah's allusion, when he sent a-visiting to the prophet Isaiah for his *voice* and suffrage, seemeth to import, Isa. xxxvii. 2–4,) to help and assist

his promises and decrees in their travail with mercies and deliverance, Zeph. ii. 2, when these their children do come unto the birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth.

In all which they shall therefore have the honour to be accounted co-workers together with God in his greatest works of wonder. And at the latter day, when that great and last edition, both of all God's works and likewise ours, then complete and finished, shall be published to all the world, they shall find their names put to them, together with his own; and the same by him acknowledged to be as truly the works of their hearts and prayers as that they are the sole work of his hands and power. Such honour have all his saints.

And if all the works of God are so exceeding great, Ps. xcii. 5, and his thoughts therein so very deep that every iota of them doth deserve our deepest studies and intentions, and thereunto require a proper skill and wisdom, to read his hand, peculiar unto the saints, ver. 6; whereunto there must be adjoined the most diligent search and attentive observation, to find out his meaning in them, Ps. lxxvii. 6; and withal a special inclination and delight to be conversant therein, 'Thy works are very great, sought out of them that have pleasure in them,' Ps. cxi. 2; and if, of all the rest, those choicer pieces, his works of mercy, may challenge our best regard, in which his heart and delights are most, on which his wisdom hath laid on the richest workmanship, in the most curious contrivements of his love, Mic. vii. 18: then surely that selected volume of more special mercies, his epistles, vouchsafed in answer to our prayers, is above all other most exactly to be studied, and most diligently to be perused by us; wherein God doth unbosom himself, and lay open his heart more sweetly, more familiarly unto us, which are directed, and in a manner dedicated more particularly unto ourselves alone: many of them written with his own hand, in a more immediate manner discovered and appearing in them; and all of them come sealed with the impress of everlasting love, and down-laden with the enclosure of the most precious tokens of his special favour. Whoso is wise will observe these things, and they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord, Ps. cvii. 43.

Neither have such favours only more of mercy in the things themselves bestowed, but are further endeared to us by being made our own mercies, by a more peculiar title to them; by which the kindness in them is rendered double. For therein we have that royal liberty to become our own choosers, and contrivers of our own condition, having all the promises thrown down to us, with blanks for us to write our names in which of them we please, which is the greatest liberty. And we have withal his Spirit secretly directing and fixing the needle of our desires to the same point, wherein his great intentions towards us do meet with our best good; which is indeed the truest liberty. And to be made ourselves, whom we love so well, and therefore delight to do good unto, the chiefest instruments under him of our own greatest happiness, is a privilege than which the creature is not made capable of a more transcendent royalty. And when the greatest love, thus rectified,

which possibly we can bear ourselves, hath opened its mouth widest, and stretched our desires in praying to the utmost compass, then will God's infinite vast love not only fit them, but do for us above all that we are able to ask, yea, to think; exceeding abundantly above all; as far above as his thoughts are above our thoughts, which is far more than the heavens are higher than the earth.

All which, when put together, if well considered, how would it provoke us to call in all that precious stock of our time, thoughts, and intentions which we cast away on trifles, to lay out the choicest portion of them in this thriving trade of intercourse with God; the returns whereof are better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. It is the praying Christian that alone employs the riches of the promises, which we usually let lie by us, like dead stock, unimproved: whilst he, like a wise and diligent merchant, looks abroad upon all the affairs of Jesus Christ that are afloat here in this world, and adventures in them all; is watchful to spy out all advantages, and with a holy πραγμοσυνη intermeddleth in every business that may bring in glory unto God, good unto the church, grace and comfort to his own soul. And how infinitely rich must that man needs become that puts even God's riches out to use, with the increase of ten talents for one, yea, a hundred-fold!

The due estimate whereof would no less quicken us to as diligent an inquiry, what becomes of all those goodly adventures, the prayers we make; to listen what haven they arrive at,—how, and when, and with what fraught they do return.

In which great duty, and most necessary property of all true merchants, many of the best and greatest dealers, that are diligent enough in praying, are yet found failing and deficient; that omit no gainful opportunity of adventure, but are careless and unobservant of their returns.

Some, through ignorance, it may be, that this is at all a duty, or of any such importance, are careful only how to lade in prayers enough, not expecting to find any of this bread cast upon the waters, until that great and general return of themselves and all the world with joy bringing their sheaves with them. Others, though at present many of their prayers come home after a few days, and richly laden, yet through want of skill to read those bills of exchange which God often writes in an obscurer character, they lie unregarded by them. Many, when voyages prove long, though to their greater advantage when once they do return, yet in the meantime, through discouragement, they give all for lost, as we do ships at sea we cannot hear of. The most are commonly complaining that their adventures still miscarry, and that little or nothing comes of all their prayers. And all are negligent of keeping their books of accounts, to cast up their comings in and goings out the one with the other. By which they lose the chiefest portion of that comfort which for the present God hath here allotted to us to live upon, the revenues of their prayers. And God also is not only robbed of that custom of his glory which should thence accrue, but wronged also by standing still

as debtor in their accounts to many prayers, in the return of which he hath been creditor long ago.

I have endeavoured in this small treatise to convince believers of the grand importance of this duty, which is so full of gain; to discover likewise the causes of the neglect herein, and remove the temptations and discouragements which do occasion it; and have briefly resolved such cases as do more usually occur in the practice of it. But principally my desire was to give in some few experiments and observations which may help to teach the weaker sort, though not perfectly to read, yet here and there to spell, and especially out of the impressions in their own hearts, God's meaning towards them in his answers. I have cast in some scattered calculations of broken prayers cast up, which though they will not amount to make general and perfect tables out of, yet may serve as instances and examples for young beginners, to direct them in the exercise of this most useful skill and wisdom, how to compute and balance their accounts by comparing their prayers and their returns together.

This small and imperfect embryon I have presumed to send forth into the world; and directed it first of all to present its service unto you, and make an honourable and thankful mention of your name. Your worth deserves a more costly, large, and lasting monument for this inscription. Your own abilities of learning, eloquence, and depth of wisdom in human affairs, would you be persuaded to lay them out as you are able, would erect such a remembrance and sumptuous memorial of you when you are gathered to your fathers, as would bear some proportion to your great worth. But that which emboldened me was the near affinity which meditations of this nature do hold with those other your more retired thoughts you think to none but God and your own soul. You have been long a frequent and constant dealer in this blessed way of intercourse with God in private. Those that know you, know your strict observance of those exchange hours you have devoted to meet with God and enjoy communion with him. But, above all, it was that personal obligation under which a great and special favour from you long since brought me, upon which I devoted (with myself) the first of my labours unto your service. And it became one great relief unto my thoughts, weighing the many inconveniences of appearing thus in public, that it gave so full occasion to pay my vows thus openly before all the world; which having now done, God, that is rich in mercy to all that call upon him, fill you with all grace, and fulfil all your petitions!—So prays,

Your worship's obliged to love and serve you,

THOMAS GOODWIN.

THE RETURN OF PRAYERS.

I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.—PSALM LXXXV. 8.

The coherence of the words.

THIS psalm was penned in the name and for the comfort of the whole church of the Jews, both as a prophecy of, and a prayer for, their return out of the Babylonish captivity, and the flowing in again of that ancient glory, peace, administration of justice, liberty of God's ordinances, plenty and increase, which formerly they enjoyed, but had now suffered an ebb of seventy years' continuance. And first he beginneth with prayer, from the first verse to this we have in hand, putting the Lord in mind of, and urging him with his gracious dealings in former times unto his church. This is not the first time, saith he, that the church hath been in captivity, and that thou hast returned it, (as out of Egypt, &c.,) and therefore we hope that thou wilt do so again: 'Thou hast been favourable unto thy land,' &c. His prayer being finished, and he having spoke, he now stands and listens, as you use to do when you expect an echo, what echo he should have, what answer would be returned from heaven, whither his prayer had already come: 'I will hear what the Lord will speak;' or, as some read it, 'I hear what the Lord doth speak:' for sometimes there is a present echo, a speedy answer returned to a man's heart, even ere the prayer is half finished; as unto Daniel, chap. ix. 20, 21. And in brief it is this, 'The Lord will speak peace unto his people:' this answer he finds written at the bottom of the petition, but with this clause of admonition for time to come added, 'But let them not return again to folly;'—a good use to be made of so gracious an answer.

CHAPTER I.

The main observation and subject of this discourse thence deduced: That God's people are diligently to observe the answers to their prayers.—The reasons of it.

THESE words being especially spoken in relation to God's returning answer to his prayer made, therefore in that relation I mean principally to handle them.

The observation is this: That when a man hath put up prayers to God, he is to rest assured that God will in mercy answer his prayers; and to listen diligently, and observe how his prayers are answered: both are here to be observed. 'I will hear what God will speak;' that is, how he will accomplish them: and withal he confidently expresseth an assurance that 'God will speak peace.' Thus doth the church, Mic. vii. 7, 'I will look to the Lord; I will wait; my God will hear me:' she was both sure of gracious audience with him,—'my God will hear me,'—and she will wait till he answers her; and observe how he doth it, 'I will look to the Lord;' and, ver. 9, 'I will bear the indignation of the Lord till he plead my cause.' So Habakkuk, he having made a prayer against the tyranny of Nebuchadnezzar, in the first chapter, having ended it, he begins the second chapter thus, 'I will stand upon my watch tower, and see what he will answer me:' and in the end an answer comes, ver. 2; and as he thus waited for a vision, for sometimes their prophecies were in answer to their prayers, so should we for an answer unto ours.

Reason 1.—Because otherwise you take an ordinance of God in vain in your hearts, which is to take God's name, with whom in that ordinance you deal, in vain; for it is a sign you think your prayer not an effectual means to attain that end it is ordained for, and say secretly in your hearts, as they, Job xxi. 15, 'What profit have we if we pray to him?' For if we use any means, and expect not the end, it is a sign we think the means vain to accomplish that end. Whereas every faithful prayer is ordained of God to be a means to obtain what we desire and pray for, and is not put up in vain, but shall have answer: 1 John v. 14, 15, 'This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.' It is true God heareth an enemy, but to hear with favour is the hearing there meant; and is so used in our ordinary speech, as we say of a favourite that he hath the king's ear; and if a man be obstinate to a man's counsel, we say he would not hear, though he give the hearing: so here, to hear is a word of gracious inclination to do the thing required; and thus God's ears are said to be open to their prayers; and so it follows there, that 'if he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.' As soon as we have prayed, we are said to have our petitions,—that is, they are then granted,—and we may be confident they are *assented unto* by God; although in regard to outward dispensation, the com-

mand for accomplishment is not yet come forth: even as a petitioner is said to have his suit when the word of the king is gone forth that it shall be done, though it passeth not the seal, or be not signed a good while after. And like as when a wicked man sinneth, as soon as the act is committed, so soon doth sentence from God go forth against the sinner, but the execution overtakes him not, it may be, a good while after, according to that of Solomon, Eccles. viii. 11, 'sentence against an evil-doer is not presently executed;' it is presently sentenced, as the words imply, but not executed: so in like manner falleth it out when a godly man prays, that as soon as the prayer arrives in heaven, which is in an instant, so soon is the petition granted,—so Dan. ix. 23, 'At the beginning of his prayer the command came forth,' though the angel, who brought the answer, arrived not at him till towards the end in the evening, ver. 21,—but the real accomplishment of it may be deferred. So as no prayer in respect of an answer to it is in vain; but where God hath given a heart to speak, he hath an ear to hear: which not to regard, is to take an ordinance in vain, which is God's name.

Reason 2.—And, secondly, not simply God's name, as in an ordinance made known, but also his name, that is, his attributes, are taken in vain. For it is a sign you think of that God you pray to, that either 'his ear is heavy, that he cannot hear, or his hand shortened, that he cannot save,' or his heart straitened, and his bowels restrained, that he will not: and thus you rob him, and despoil him of one of his most royal titles, whereby he styles himself, Ps. lxv. 2, 'a God that heareth prayers;' who is so regardful of them, that, in 1 Kings viii. 59, they are said to be 'nigh the Lord day and night;' they are all before him, and he sets them in his view, as we do letters of friends, which we stick in our windows, that we may remember to answer them, or lay them not out of our bosoms, that we might be sure not to forget them: so the petitions of his people pass not out of his sight, till he sends an answer, which is called 'speaking' here; God speaking as well in his works as in his word. But you, by your neglect herein, make an idol god of him, such as were the vanities of the heathen, as if he 'had ears and heard not, eyes and saw not' your need, &c. Such a god as Elias mocked; 'You must speak aloud,' says he, 'he may be in a journey,' &c. Even such a god do you make the God of heaven and earth to be, whilst you put no more confidence in him, or make no more reckoning of your prayers to him than the heathens did of their sacrifices to their gods. Petitioners do not only put up their requests, but use to wait at great men's doors, and inquire, and listen what answer is given unto them; and it is part of an honour to great men that we do so: and for the same end are we also to wait on God, to shew his greatness, and our distance from him, and dependence upon him. 'As the eyes of the servants look to the hand of their masters, so do we,' saith David, 'on thee, till thou hast mercy on us,' Ps. cxxiii. 2. And, Ps. cxxx., after he had prayed, ver. 2, he says he 'waited more than they that watch for the morning:' like those that having some great business to do on the morrow, long for the daylight, and look often out to spy the day; so he for a glimmering and dawning of an answer. The like we have Psalm v. 3, 'In the morning will I direct my prayer to thee, and look,' that is, for an answer.

Reason 3.—Again, if God doth give you an answer, if you mind it not, you let God speak to you in vain, when you do not listen to what he answers. If two men walk together, and the one, when himself hath said and spoke what he would, listens not, but is regardless of what the other answers, he exceedingly slights the man. As, *non respondere pro convitio est*, not to

answer again is contempt; so, *non attendere*, not to attend to what one says. Now our speaking to God by prayers, and his speaking to us by answers thereunto, is one great part of our walking with God; and to study out his dealings with us, to compare our prayers and his answers together, which are as dialogues between us and him. It is said of Samuel's prophecy, that not a word of it fell to the ground, 1 Sam. iii. 19: and so it may be said of our prayers; and so it ought to be of God's answers, not a word of them should fall to the ground; as there doth, if you by your observation and listening thereunto catch them not, (as Benhadad's servants are said to do Ahab's words,) apprehend and observe them not. And by the same reason that you are to observe the fulfilling of God's promises, you are of your prayers also. Now, 1 Kings viii. 56, it is said, 'not one word failed of all he promised.' Solomon had observed this by a particular survey and register made of all that God had spoken and done for them, and found not a promise unperformed. And there is the like reason both of answers to prayers and for our observing of them, for prayers are but putting promises into suit; and therefore Solomon brings those words in there to this very purpose, to confirm their faith in this, that no prayers made would fail, being grounded on a promise; thereby to encourage others and his own heart to diligence herein, as also as a motive unto God to hear him; for, ver. 59, he infers upon it, 'Let my words be nigh thee,' &c., seeing thou always thus performest thy good word unto thy people.

Reason 4.—Yea, you will provoke the Lord not to answer at all; he will forbear to answer, because he sees it will be thus in vain. When a man is talking to one that listens not to him, he will cease to answer, and leave off speaking; and so will God. So as that which the Apostle says of faith, Heb. x. 36, that it is not enough to believe, but 'when you have done the will of God, you have need of patience' to eke out faith, 'that you may inherit the promises,' may be also said, and is alike true, of praying. It is not enough to pray, but after you have prayed, you have need to listen for an answer, that you may receive your prayers; God will not fulfil them else. As he said, the sermon was not *done* when yet the preacher had done, because it is not done till practised; so our prayers are not done when yet made, but you must further wait for and attend the accomplishment.

Reason 5.—If you observe not his answers, how shall you bless God and return thanks to him for hearing your prayers? Ps. cxvi. 1, 'I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplication;' and therefore he goes on to thank him throughout the whole psalm. You are to 'watch unto prayer with thanksgiving,' Col. iv. 2; and therefore, as to watch, to observe, and recollect your own wants, which you are to pray for, that you may have matter of requests to put up, so also to observe God's answers for matter of thanksgiving; and many fill that commonplace head full of matter to furnish them for petitioning, but as for this other of thanksgiving, they watch not unto it against they come to pray, nor study matter for that head also. And if any study will furnish you this way, it is the studying out of God's answers to your prayers. The reason you pray so much, and give thanks so little is, that you observe not God's answers; you do not study them. When we have put up a faithful prayer, God is made our debtor by promise, and we are to take notice of his payment, and give him an acknowledgment of the receipt of it; he loseth of his glory else.

Reason 6.—As God loseth, so yourselves also the experience which you might get thereby. (1.) Both experience of God and his faithfulness, which *will cause* in you hope and confidence in God another time, when you have

found him again and again answering your prayers. It was a speech of one eminent in holiness, upon occasion of the accomplishment of a great request made to God by him, that God having never denied him any request, 'I have tried God often, now,' says he, 'henceforth I will trust him.' If the hearing the prayers of another will encourage us to go to God,—as Ps. xxxii. 6, 'For this cause shall every one that is godly pray unto thee,'—much more when we observe and have experience that our own are heard; therefore, says David, Ps. cxvi. 2, 'The Lord hath heard me, and I will call upon him as long as I live;' as if he had said, Now that God hath heard me, I know whither to go: this experiment, if I had no more, is enough to encourage me for ever to pray unto God; I have learned by it to call upon him as long as I live. And also, (2.) by observing God's answers to your prayers, you will gain much insight into your own hearts, and ways, and prayers, and may thereby learn how to judge of them. So, Ps. lxvi. 18, 19, David's assurance that he did not regard iniquity in his heart was strengthened by God's having heard his prayers; for thus he reasons, 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me; but God hath heard me.' For, [1.] if God doth not grant your petitions, it will put you to study a reason of that his dealing; and so you will come to search into your prayers and the carriage of your hearts, therein to see whether you did not pray amiss: according to that, 'Ye lust and have not, . . . because ye ask amiss,' James iv. 3. As if you send to a friend, who is punctual in that point of friendship of returning answers, and useth not to fail, and you receive no answer from him, you will begin to think there is something in it. And so also here, when a petition is denied, you will be jealous of yourselves, and inquisitive what should be the matter; and so by that search come to see that in your prayers which you will learn to mend the next time. Or, [2.] if they be answered, yet because that therein usually God deals in a proportion with you to your prayers,—as you might perceive if you would observe his dealings with you,—you would by this means come to have much insight into God's acceptation and opinion of your ways: for you should see his dealings with you, and yours with him, to be exceeding parallel and correspondent, and hold proportion each with other. So, Ps. xviii. 6, 'In my distress I called upon the Lord;' and so, ver. 7, 8, &c., he goes on to describe his deliverance, which was the fruit of those prayers, and then, at ver. 20, 21, &c., he adds his observation upon both, 'According to the cleanness of my hands hath he dealt with me,' &c. 'For with the pure thou shalt shew thyself pure.'

Reason 7.—You will lose much of your comfort. There is no greater joy than to see prayers answered, or to see souls converted by us: John xvi. 24, 'Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.' The receiving answers makes joy to abound and overflow. Yea, even when we pray for others, if our prayers be answered for them, our joys are exceeding great; much more when in our own behalf. And therein, even in the smallest things which a Christian doth enjoy, doth his comfort exceed another's, that he hath them by virtue of prayers and promises. he knows how he came by them. If 'stolen waters be sweet, and bread eaten in secret,' &c., (as Solomon says, Prov. ix. 17,) to wicked men, begged meat is much more sweet to godly men; yea, in the very praying for outward mercies, there is more sweetness than they have in enjoying them. As it is joy to a good heart to see any one converted, but much more to him that is the means of it,—'I have no greater joy,' says St John, 'than that my children walk in truth,' 3 Epist. 4,—so to see God do good to his church, and hear others' prayers, is a comfort, but much more to see him do it at a man's own prayers. Therefore, when

God restores comfort to a drooping soul, he is said, Isa. lvii. 18, to 'restore comfort also to his mourners,' that is, to those that prayed and mourned for him, as well as unto that soul itself; it being a comfort to them to see their prayers answered. Comfort it is many ways: (1.) To hear from God, as to hear from a friend, though it be but two or three words, and that about a small matter; if there be at the bottom this subscription, 'your loving father,' or, 'your assured friend,' it satisfies abundantly; so also, (2.) to know that God is mindful of us, accepts our works, fulfils his promises. (3.) How doth it rejoice one to find another of his mind in a controversy; but that God and we should be of one mind, and concur in the desire of the same things,—not two in the earth only agree, Matt. xviii. 19, but God who is in heaven and we to agree,—this rejoiceth the heart exceedingly. And thus it is when a man perceives his prayer answered. Therefore you lose much of your comfort in blessings when you do not observe answers to your prayers.

CHAPTER II.

Three cases propounded: the first concerning prayers for the church, and for the accomplishment of such promises as may fall out in ages to come.

Now as for rules and helps to find out God's meaning towards you in your prayers, and to spy out answers, and how to know when God doth anything in answer to your prayers, this is the next thing to be handled: wherein, first, I will answer some cases and queries which may fall out in several sorts of prayers, about the answering of them.

1. As, first, concerning prayers put up for the church, for the accomplishment of such things as fall out in ages to come.

2. Concerning prayers made for others, of your friends, kindred, &c.

3. Concerning those prayers, whether for yourselves or others, wherein others join with you.

1. For the first:—

(1.) There may be some prayers which you must be content never yourselves to see answered in this world, the accomplishment of them not falling out in your time: such as are those you haply make for the calling of the Jews, the utter downfall of God's enemies, the flourishing of the gospel, the full purity and liberty of God's ordinances, the particular flourishing and good of the society and place you live in. All you whose hearts are right do treasure up many such prayers as these, and sow much of such precious seed, which you must be content to have the church, it may be, in after ages to reap; all which prayers are not yet lost, but will have answers: for as God is an eternal God, and Christ's righteousness an 'everlasting righteousness,' and therefore of eternal efficacy, Dan. ix. 24, 'being offered up by the eternal Spirit,' Heb. ix. 14, so are prayers also, which are the work of the eternal Spirit of Christ, made to that God in his name, and in him are eternally accepted, and of eternal force, and therefore may take place in after ages. So the prayer that St Stephen made for his persecutors took place in Saul when St Stephen was dead. So David's prayer against Judas, Ps. cix. 8, 9, took effect above a thousand years after, as appears, Acts i. 20. So the prayers of the church, for three hundred years, in the primitive times, that kings might come to the knowledge of the truth, and they 'lead peaceable and quiet lives, in all godliness and honesty,' (which St Paul, in Nero's time, exhorted unto, 1 Tim. ii. 2,) were not answered and accomplished till Constantine's time, when the church brought forth a man-child, Rev. xii. 5. So, Isa. lviii., after he had exhorted to, and given directions for fasting and prayer in a right manner, he adjoineth this promise, 'Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach;' namely, for this, because his fasting and prayers might have influence into many ages yet to come, in the accomplishment of what was prayed for. And that which Christ says of the apostles' reaping the fruit of St John the Baptist's ministry, and the seed he had sown, is in like manner

herein verified, John iv. 37, 'One soweth and another reapeth.' And in this sense, that which the Papists say is true, that there is a common treasury of the church, not of their merits, but of their prayers. There are bottles of tears a-filling, vials a-filling to be poured out for the destruction of God's enemies. What a collection of prayers hath there been these many ages towards it! And that may be one reason why God will do such great things towards the end of the world, even because there hath been so great a stock of prayers going for so many ages, which is now to be returned. And herein it falls out to us in our prayers as in their prophecies to the prophets of old: 1 Pet. i. 11, 'The Spirit in them did signify the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things that are now revealed.' And thus is it in the spirit of prayer, which is instead of the spirit of prophecy; for we pray through the guidance of the Spirit, 'who teacheth us what to ask,' for many things that come to pass in after ages.

(2.) Only at present in prayer it may be that thou hast revealed unto thee, by a secret impression made on thy spirit, that these things shall come to pass, and so hast thy faith confirmed in them, and withal an evidence, that even for thy prayers, among others, God will perform them; and that the contribution of thy prayers doth help to make up the sum. And upon such prayers God usually for the present also testifies the acceptation of a man's person, and reveals himself most to him that he is his, as he did to Moses: he never revealed his love to Moses more than when he prayed most for God's people. And haply thou hast that as one of thy best evidences of the uprightness of thy heart, that thou canst pray for the church's good, though for a long time to come, which thou mayest never behold with thine eyes, even as David also did, and rejoiced in it.

(3.) And when they are accomplished, and thou in heaven, thy joy will surely be the more full for these thy prayers: as at the conversion of those thou hast prayed for, so at the ruin of the church's enemies, &c., whom thou didst pray against; for if there be joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner, as at the birth of a new prince and heir of heaven, then haply in a proportion he shall rejoice most whose prayers had most hand in it, and a special interest therein. And so as thy other works, so thy prayers follow thee, and 'the fruit of them,' as Jeremiah speaks, chap. xvii. 10; and, however, yet at the day of judgment thou shalt rejoice, as well as they that enjoyed the fruit of thy prayers in their times, thou having sown the seed of their happiness: 'Both he that sows and he that reaps shall then rejoice together,' as Christ says, John iv. 36.

CHAPTER III.

The second case, concerning prayers made for others, of our friends, &c. —How they are answered.

2. THE second case is concerning answers to our prayers for others, for particular men, as friends and kindred, &c., and likewise for temporal blessings.

Pray for others you know we must; so the elders of the church for those that are sick, James v. 15, 16: 'Pray one for another,' says St James. As in case a man is troubled with a lust, tell some private friend of it: 'Confess your sins one to another,' that when a man's own prayers are not strong enough to cast it out, it may be done by the help of another's prayers joined with his. So it follows, 'that ye may be healed,' ver. 16, for in that sense I understand healing in ver. 16. So also, 1 John v. 16, 'If a man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death,'—that is, not against the Holy Ghost,—'he shall ask life for him, and God shall give him life that sins not unto death.'

Concerning this case, I give these considerations, how such prayers are answered:—

First consideration.—Such prayers God often heareth; why else are any such promises made? As, 'that they shall be healed in their bodies,' James v. 15, 'healed of their lusts,' ver. 16; 'converted to life,' 1 John v. 16. God hath made these to encourage us to pray, and to testify his abundant love to us; that it so overflows and runs over, that he will hear us, not only for ourselves, but for others also; which is a sign we are in extraordinary favour. So God intimates concerning Abraham to Abimelech, Gen. xx. 7, 'He is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live.' And as he was a prophet, so we are priests, as for ourselves, so for others also, to God our Father; and it is a prerogative we have through the fellowship we have, and communion of Christ's priestly office, 'who hath made us kings and priests,' Rev. i. 6, to prevail and intercede for others, and a special token and pledge of extraordinary love; for if God hears a man's prayers for others, much more for himself in his own behalf. So when Christ healed the man sick of the palsy, it was, as it is said, for the faith of the standers-by, Matt. ix. 2: 'He, seeing their faith, said, Thy sins are forgiven thee.' The meaning is not as if for their faith's sake he forgave that man his sins, for, Hab. ii. 4, 'the just doth live by' his own 'faith;' but to encourage them who out of faith brought that sick man to him, and us all in like manner to bring others and their plaints by prayer before him, he therefore then took occasion to declare and pronounce forgiveness to that poor man; he therefore then said, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.'

Second consideration—Yet, secondly, prayers for others may often also not obtain the particular thing prayed for them. So Samuel's prayer for Saul, 1 Sam. xv. 35; so David for his enemies, Ps. xxxv. 13.

For it is in this as it is in the use of other means and ordinances for the

good of others; God making such like kind of promises to our prayers herein as he hath made to our endeavours to convert when we preach to men: that look, as we preach to many, and yet but few believe,—for 'who hath believed our report?' Rom. x. 16, even 'as many as are ordained to eternal life;' we 'become all to all, and win but some,'—so we pray for many, not knowing who are ordained to eternal life, which whilst we know not, we are yet to pray for them, 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4. Only as where God hath set his ordinance of preaching, it is more than a probable sign he hath some to convert, and usually the word takes among some, though often but a few; so when he hath stirred up our hearts to pray for others, it is a sign God will hear us for some of those we pray for, yet so as we may be denied. For God doth require it as a duty on our parts, because it is an outward means ordained by God, by which sometimes he useth to bring things to pass; but yet not as such a certain and infallible means, as he hath tied himself universally unto, to bring the thing to pass on his part.

And though indeed his promise to hear and accept the prayer is general and universal, yet the promise to hear it, by granting the very thing itself prayed for, is but an indefinite promise, such as he makes to other means of doing men good; as to our admonitions and reproofs, and to our preaching, &c. He makes such promises because sometimes he doth hear and convert by them. For instance, that promise, James v. 15, of healing the sick, cannot be universal; for it might then be supposed, as a truth implied in it, that sick men might never die, whereas 'it is appointed for all men once to die,' Heb. ix. 27, seeing it may be supposed that the elders may at all such times of danger of death still come and pray with them. But the meaning is, that it is an ordinance which God hath made a gracious promise unto, because he often doth restore the sick at their prayers: and therefore upon every such particular occasion, we are to rely upon God for the performance of it by an act of recumbency, though with an act of full assurance that we shall obtain it we cannot; the promise being not universal, but indefinite.

Of the like nature are all other promises of things temporal and outward, of which we herein speak, as when God promiseth to give long life to them that honour their parents, riches and honours to them that fear him; the tenor and purport of which promises is not, as if absolutely, infallibly, and universally God doth always perform these to those that are yet truly qualified with the conditions specified in those promises; the contrary both Scripture instances and common experience shews: they are therefore indefinitely meant, and so to be understood by us. For, because whenever God doth dispense any such mercies to any of his, he would do it by promise; all his ways to his being truth, that is, the fulfilling of some truth promised; and also God having purposed in his outward dispensation of things here in this world, to bestow riches and honours upon some that fear him, though not upon all, for how then should 'all things fall alike to all,' Eccles. ix. 2, poverty and contempt upon them that fear God, even as well as those that fear him not? He hath therefore indefinitely expressed his gracious dispensation herein: requiring answerably an act of faith—which principle in us is suited to a promise, as a faculty is to its proper object—suitable to that his meaning in the promise; that as he intended not in such promises an absolute, infallible, universal obligation of himself to the performance of them to all that fear him, so the act of faith which a man is to put forth toward this promise, in the application of it for his own particular, is not required to be an absolute, infallible persuasion and assurance that *God will* bestow these outward things upon him, having these qualifications

in him; but only an indefinite act, as I may so call it, of recumbency and submission, casting and adventuring ourselves upon him for the performance of it to us, not knowing but he may in his outward dispensations make it good to us, yet with submission to his good pleasure, if otherwise he disposeth it.

It is true, indeed, that that act of general assent which faith is to give to this promise, in the general abstract truth of it, is to be an assured certain persuasion and belief that God hath made this promise, and that he certainly will and doth perform it unto some according to his purpose expressed therein; which act of general assent is that believing without wavering,—namely, of the truth of the promise in general,—which St James calls for in prayer, chap. i. 6. But yet that special act of application, as divines call it, required in this faith, whereby I am to rest upon it for my own particular, is not required to be such an undoubted persuasion as to think that I shall certainly have this particular promise in kind fulfilled to me; for the truth, purpose, and intent of the promise is not universal, but indefinite. So as it is but an *it may be*, as God elsewhere expresseth such promises, as Zeph. ii. 3, that it shall be performed to me; and yet because it may be God will perform it unto me, therefore my duty is to cast myself upon God, and put in for it, with submission to his good pleasure for the performance of it to me. So that so far as the truth and intent of it is revealed to be infallible and certain, so far a man is bound to have an answerable act of faith, of certain and infallible persuasion towards it, as to believe without wavering that God hath made such a promise, and will perform it according to his intent in making it, which is unto some. But yet withal, because the tenor of it is but indefinite, and in that respect whether it shall be performed to me or no is not therein certainly revealed; therefore God requires not of me, in the application of such a promise, an absolute full persuasion that he will perform it to me in such or such a manner, &c.; but only an act of dependence and adherence, with referring it to his wise and righteous good pleasure towards me.

And yet again, if God should at any time give a man such a special faith concerning any such particular temporal blessing for himself or another, then he is bound to believe it thus in particular: as when he gave power to any to work miracles, as to his apostles he did, with a commission to work them, then they were bound to believe that such and such a miracle should infallibly be wrought by them, as that the devils should be cast out by them, &c. And therefore in this case Christ rebukes his disciples for not believing thus upon such particular occasions, Matt. xvii. 20.

And then it is also true that if God give such a faith, he will infallibly perform it; and thus those his words are to be understood, Matt. xxi. 22, 'Whatsoever ye ask in faith, believing, ye shall receive:' he speaks it of the faith of miracles; for, ver. 21, he had said, 'If ye believe and doubt not, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove into the sea, and it shall be removed.' So that when God works such a faith, and we are called to it, we are bound to believe with a certain persuasion that such a thing will be done, and it shall be done; but unto such a kind of special faith in temporal promises for ourselves or others, God doth not now always call us. If indeed at any time we did believe and doubted not, by reason of a special faith wrought by God, that God would remove a mountain into the sea, or bestow any outward mercy, it should be done; for he that stirred up such a faith would accomplish the thing. But it is not that which God requires of believers, that they should without doubting thus believe concerning outward things,

the promises thereof being not universal but indefinite; and therefore answerably a man is not absolutely bound to believe that God will certainly bestow such a temporal blessing on him, no, not though he should have the qualification which the promise is made unto, the promise being not universal, made to all so qualified, but indefinite, to some of such so qualified. The case is the same of believing promises made to our praying for others, which is the thing in hand.

Third consideration.—When the prayers are thus made out of conscience of our duty for such whom yet God doth not intend that mercy unto, then they are returned again into our own bosoms, to our advantage; even as St Paul saith, that his rejoicing that others preached, though they lost their labour, should turn to his salvation, Phil. i. 19. So prayers for others, though to the parties themselves we prayed for they prove in vain, yet they turn to our good. So, Ps. xxxv. 12, 13, when his enemies were sick, David prayed and humbled himself; 'and my prayers,' says he, 'returned into my bosom.' David did by this his prayer in secret for his enemies testify the sincerity of his heart to God, and his true forgiveness of them,—for it is the usual disposition of God's children to pray for them that are the greatest enemies to them,—and this prayer, though it did not profit them, yet it turned to David's own good; it came back, and home again to him, with blessings to himself; God delighting in and rewarding such a disposition in his child, as much as any other, because therein we resemble Christ so truly, and shew that God is our Father, and ourselves to have his bowels in us. And God stirreth up this praying disposition in his children for their enemies, not always that he means to hear them for them, but because he means to draw forth, and so have an occasion to reward, those holy dispositions which are the noblest parts of his image in them, and wherewith he is so much delighted; and so their prayers return into their own bosom, and it is taken as if they had prayed for themselves all that while. Thus in like manner, when Moses prayed so earnestly for the people of Israel, God offered to return his prayer into his own bosom, and do as much for him alone as he had desired that God would do for them. 'I will make thee a great nation,' says God to him, for whom I will do as much for thy sake as thou hast prayed I should do for these. As in preaching the gospel, Christ told the disciples, that if in any house they came to preach peace, there were not a 'son of peace,' Luke x. 6, on whom the message might take place, and their peace rest, 'your peace,' says he, 'shall return unto you again.' So is it if your prayers take not place.

Fourth consideration.—If we have prayed long for those whom God intends not mercy unto, he will in the end cast them out of our prayers and hearts, and take our hearts off from praying for them. That which he did by a revelation from heaven to some prophets of old, as to Samuel and Jeremiah, the same he doth by a more undiscerned work; that is, by withdrawing assistance to pray for such by withdrawing the spirit of supplication from a man, for some men, and in some businesses. Now thus he did with Samuel: 'Why dost thou mourn for Saul?' 1 Sam. xvi. 1. So with Jeremiah, chap. vii. 16, 'Pray not for this people.' And this he doth because he is loath when his people do pray but to hear them, and would not that such precious breath as that of prayer is should be without its full and direct success, or be in vain; therefore when he means not to hear, he lays the key of prayer out of the way, so desirous is he to give answers to every prayer. It falls out in this case of praying for another as in reproving another. One *whom* God intends not good unto, God will lock up a man's heart towards

such a man, that he shall not be able to reprove him; when towards another God doth enlarge it as much, where he intends good. Thus it is sometimes in praying for another; so as in praying a man shall not be able to pray for, as not to reprove such a man, though his heart was to do both: but it fareth with him as God threateneth concerning Ezekiel towards that people, that he 'makes his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth,' Ezek. iii. 26.

Fifth consideration.—God will hear those prayers for, and answer them in, some others, in whom we shall have as much comfort as in those we prayed for; and so it often proves and falls out. God, to shew 'he looks not as man looks,' nor chooseth as he chooseth, lets our hearts be set on work to pray for the conversion or good of one he intends not mercy to; and then answers them in some other, whom he makes as dear unto us. When God had cast off Saul, still Samuel's heart lingered after him, and he mourned for him; but God, at the same time, when he bids him cease mourning for Saul, 1 Sam. xvi., to shew that yet he accepted that his mourning as it came from him, 'Go,' says he, 'and anoint one of the sons of Jesse,' 1 Sam. xvi. 1. Samuel desired to see a good successor in that government, and he having been their ruler it was his special care; he having anointed Saul, it exceedingly grieved him that he should prove so wicked: and God saw and answered the ground of his desires; and therefore immediately upon his prayers, sent him to anoint the best king that ever was upon that throne, who was the issue and man-child of those his prayers. And again, when Samuel came to anoint one of the sons of Jesse, when he saw Eliab, ver. 6, 'Surely,' says he, 'the Lord's anointed is before me.' If Samuel had been to choose, he would have chosen him, and would have prayed for and desired him; but 'God seeth not as man seeth,' ver. 7, and chooseth not as man chooseth; but in David was his prayer fully heard and answered, and that better. So Abraham, he had prayed for Ishmael, and 'O let Ishmael live in thy sight!' Gen. xvii. 18; but God gave him Isaac instead of him. So perhaps thou prayest for one child more than for another, out of thy natural affection, looking on his countenance and stature, as Samuel did on Eliab's; but yet thy prayers being sincere in the ground of them, in that thou desirest a child of promise, God therefore answers thee, though in another, for whom yet haply thy heart was not so much stirred; who yet, when he is converted, proves to thee as great a comfort: and it is as much as if that other thou didst most pray for had been wrought upon.

CHAPTER IV.

The third case, about such prayers wherein others join with us.—How therein to discern the influence of our own prayers.

3. THE third case to be considered is, when a man prays for something with others, or which others likewise pray for with him, so as he is not alone in it; how then should he know that his prayers have a hand in obtaining it, as well as theirs? For in such cases Satan is apt to object, Though the thing is granted indeed, yet not for thy prayers, but for the prayers of those others joined in it with thee.

(1.) If thy heart did sympathise and accord in the same holy affections with those others in praying, then it is certain thy voice hath helped to carry it: 'If two agree on earth,' says Christ, Matt. xviii. 19, the word is *συμφωνήσωσιν*; that is, if they harmonially agree to play the same tune; for prayers are music in God's ears, and so called 'melody to God,' Eph. v. 19. It is not simply their agreeing in the thing prayed for, but in the affections; for it is the affections that make the concert and the melody. Now if the same holy affections were touched and struck by God's Spirit in thy heart that in theirs, then thou doest help to make up the concert, and without thee it would have been imperfect; yea, without thee the thing might not have been done, for God stands sometimes upon such a number of voices, and one voice casts it; as when he named ten righteous persons to save Sodom. When therefore the same holy motives and affections affected thee in thy prayer which did them in theirs, it was the work of the same Spirit both in them and thee, and God hath heard thee.

Especially if God did stir up the same secret instinct in thee to sympathise with another in praying for such a thing unbeknown one to another, as sometimes it falls out; then surely thy prayers are in it as well as his. You shall observe sometimes a general instinct of the Spirit put into God's people's hearts, generally to pray for or against a thing, without each other's stirring up one another; even as Ezekiel by the river Chebar prophesied the same things Jeremiah did at home at Jerusalem. Thus against the time that Christ the Messiah came in the flesh, there was a great expectation raised up in the hearts of the godly people to look and pray for him, Luke ii. 27, 38.

(2.) God doth usually and often evidence to a man, that his prayers contributed and went among the rest towards the obtaining of it; as—

[1.] By some circumstance: as, for example, sometimes by ordering it so that that man that prayed most for a thing of concernment, should have the first news of it when it comes to be accomplished; which God doth, as knowing it will be most welcome news to him. God doth herein as we do with a friend, who we know is cordial in, and wisheth well to a business; he sends him the first word of it who was most hearty in it, and prayed most about it. Good old Simeon had surely been earnest in seeking the Lord, as well

as the rest in Jerusalem, to send the Messiah into the world, to restore and raise up the ruins of Israel; for God did reveal to him that he should see him before he died: and therefore to evidence to him his respect to his prayers, God carried the good old man into the temple just at the time when the child was brought into the temple, for to 'be presented to the Lord,' Luke ii. 27, 28. And in like manner good Anna, 'who had served God with fasting and prayer, night and day,' God ordereth it so that she must also come in at the same instant, Luke ii. 38. By some such like peculiar circumstance or other doth God often use to witness to a man's heart that he hath heard him in businesses prayed for in common with others.

[2.] By filling the heart with much joy in the accomplishment of what a man prayed for: which is an evident argument that his prayers did move the Lord to effect it, as well as the prayers of others. Thus that good old Simeon, seeing his prayers now answered, he was even willing to die through joy; and thought he could not die in a better time: 'Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace.' For when the desires have vented and laid out much of themselves, then when the return comes home, they have an answerable part and share in the comfort of it: and as desires abounded in praying, so will joy and comfort also in the accomplishment. As when a ship comes home, not only the chief owners, but every one that ventured shall have a share out of the return, in a proportion to the adventure; so here, though some one whom it mainly concerns hath especial interest in the mercy obtained, yet thou shalt have thy prayers out in joy from God that the thing is granted. St Paul had planted a church at Thessalonica, but he could not stay to water it with his own preaching, yet when absent he waters those plants which he had set, with prayers, night and day: 1 Thess. iii. 10, 'Night and day praying exceedingly for you,' says he. And as his prayers were exceeding abundant for them, so was his joy as abundant in them, when he had heard that they stood steadfast, and fell not back again: 'Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord,' ver. 8. 'And what thanks can we render to God for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before the Lord?' ver. 9.

[3.] If God give you a heart thankful for a blessing vouchsafed to another, prayed for by you with others, it is another sign your prayers have some hand in it. St Paul knew not what thanks to give for the answering of his prayers, as in that forementioned place. Old Eli had put up but one short ejaculatory petition, that we read of, for Hannah; and that was, 'The Lord grant thy petition!' 1 Sam. i. 17; and for the return of that one prayer, when Hannah related how God had answered her, ver. 26, 27, he returned solemn thanks: 'and he worshipped the Lord there,' ver. 28.

(3.) And, lastly, in case the thing concerned thyself, which was prayed for by others helping thee therein, what cause hast thou but to think that it was granted for thy own prayers, and not for theirs only? seeing God stirred up their hearts to pray for thee, and gave thee a heart to pray for thyself, and besides gave thee the thing which thou desiredst. Which argues thou art beloved as well as they, and accepted as well as they. 'I know this shall turn to my salvation through your prayers,' saith St Paul, Phil. i. 19. Though their prayers went to the business, yet had not St Paul been accepted himself, the prayers of all the men in the world would have done him but little good. God may hear the prayers of the godly for wicked men, when they do not pray themselves, in temporal things: so he did hear

Moses for Pharaoh, Abraham for Abimelech: and he may hear godly men the sooner for others' prayers; so he heard Aaron and Miriam the sooner for Moses's sake, Num. xii. 13. But if God stirs up thy heart to pray for thyself, as well as others for thee, then God that gave thee a heart to pray hath heard thy prayers also, and hath had a respect to them more in it than to theirs, because it concerned thyself, as a more special mercy unto thee.

CHAPTER V.

Common directions helpful in all cases and prayers.—First, from such observations as may be taken from before, and in praying.

HAVING premised these cases, I come now to more general and common directions to help you in discerning and observing the mind of God, and his answers to you in your prayers. All which directions are such as may be helpful in all the forementioned cases, and in all sorts of prayers whatever. And they are taken from observations to be made upon your prayers, &c., both *before, in,* and *after* praying.

First, *before* praying; when God bespeaks a prayer, as I may so speak,—that is, when God secretly speaks to the heart to pray much about a thing. I express it thus according to that phrase of David, Ps. xxvii. 8, 'Thou saidst, Seek my face, and I said, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.' Now God then speaks to the heart to pray when not only he puts upon the duty by saying to the conscience, This thou oughtest to do; but God's speaking to pray is such as his speech at first was, when he made the world, when he said, 'Let there be light, and there was light:' so he says, Let there be a prayer, and there is a prayer; that is, he pours upon a man a spirit of grace and supplication, a praying disposition; he puts in motives, suggests arguments and pleas to God; all which you shall find come in readily, and of themselves, and that likewise with a quickening heat and enlargement of affections, and with a lingering, and longing, and restlessness of spirit to be alone, to pour out the soul to God, and to vent and form those motions and suggestions into a prayer, till you have laid them together and made a prayer of them. And this is a speaking to the heart. And observe such times when God doth thus, and neglect them not, then to strike whilst the iron is hot; thou hast then his ear; it is a special opportunity for that business, such a one as thou mayest never have the like. Suitors at court observe *mollissima fandi tempora*, their times of begging when they have kings in a good mood, which they will be sure to take the advantage of; but especially if they should find that the king himself should begin of himself to speak of the business which they would have of him: and thus that phrase of Ps. x. 17 is understood by some, that God prepares the heart, and causeth the ear to hear; that is, he fashions it, and composeth it into a praying frame. And sure it is a great sign that God means to hear us when himself shall thus indite the petition.

And by the way let me give this note of difference between these speakings to the heart and those whereby Satan puts us upon such duties at unseasonable hours and times; as when we are otherwise necessarily to be employed in our callings, to eat, or to sleep, &c.; then to put upon praying is a device of his he useth to tire out new converts with. The difference will appear in this: the devil comes in a violent imperious manner upon the conscience, but enlargeth not the heart a whit unto the duty; but whenso-

ever God at such extraordinary by-times doth call upon us, he fits and prepares the heart, and fills the soul with holy suggestions, as materials for the duty; for whatsoever he calls to, he gives abilities withal to the thing he calls for.

And thus usually, when he will have any great matters done and effected, he sets men's hearts a-work to pray by a kind of gracious preinstinct; he stirs them up and toucheth the strings of their hearts by his Spirit sent down upon them. Thus against the return of the captivity he stirred up Daniel's heart, chap. ix. 1; he knowing by books the time to be near expiring, was stirred up to seek God. And so he that made this psalm, 'salvation being then nigh,' Ps. lxxxv. 9, 10; then God stirred him up to pray, and pen this prayer for their return; which God had foretold he would do, Jer. xxix. 10–12. For having promised, ver. 10, I will cause you to return after seventy years; 'then,' says he, ver. 12, 'shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.' He speaks it not only by way of command, what it was they ought to do, but as prophesying also what they should do; for then he meant to stir up their hearts, as then he did, as appears by those forementioned instances. Therefore observe what things God thus, by an instinct, doth enlarge thy heart to pray for at times, and sometimes at extraordinary by-times, when haply thou didst not think to pray about any such thing; yet he then stirred thee up most, it may be, as thou wert walking, &c., and having spare time, he draws thee into his presence, and moves thee in that manner specified.

Now, secondly, as God thus speaks to the heart to pray, so also *in* praying; and his speaking to the heart in prayer may be discerned by these particulars:—

1. When God quiets, and calms, and contents the heart in prayer, which is done by speaking something to the heart, though what is spoken be not always discerned. If you should see one who was an earnest and importunate suitor, and exceeding anxious when he went in to a great man, but beheld him after coming out from him contented, and quieted, and cheerful in his spirit, you would conceive that certainly something had been said to him which gave him encouragement, satisfaction, and contentment in his suit. Thus when thou goest to God, and hast been importunate in a business,—as suppose for Christ: O give me Christ, or else I die!—and thy desires were exceedingly up for it; but thou risest up with thy mind calmed and satisfied, and feelest the anxiousness, the solicitude of thy heart about the thing taken off and dispelled: this is a good sign that God hath heard thy prayer, and hath spoken something to thy heart which makes it thus composed. When Hannah, out of much bitterness and with strong desires, which by a long delay had been made more violent, so as her heart was much disquieted,—for, Prov. xiii. 12, 'hope,' and by the same reason desire also, 'deferred makes the soul sick,'—when out of the abundance of her grief she had poured her soul out before the Lord, 1 Sam. i. 16, Eli the priest joining in prayer also for her, 'The Lord grant thy petition;' after that prayer she found her heart so quieted, that 'she looked no more sad,' as the text says there, she arose quieted and calmed, and it was that prayer that did both fill Eli's mouth with that word of prophecy and her heart with quietness, and a secret word from God accompanying it that did still those waves: and accordingly God gave her a son, a son of her desires.

And the like God doth now, by speaking, as I said, something to the heart: as by dropping in some promise or other into the heart, or some like consideration; saying, as it were, to the heart, even as Eli from God did to

her, 'The Lord grants thy petition.' As to St Paul, when he was earnest with God about removing his buffetings by Satan, which whether they were the stirring up a lust, or temptations of blasphemy, I do not now dispute; 'I besought God thrice,' that is, earnestly, says he, 'that it might depart;' and to this he had an answer in the meantime given him, till it should be taken away, enough to still and quiet him: so 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. 'And he said,'—that is, in prayer the Lord did put in this consideration and promise into his thoughts,—'And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, and my power is made perfect in weakness.' This answer thus coming in, this promise thus seasonably suggested, stayed and quieted Paul's heart. In like manner, thou hast, it may be, been long praying against poverty or the like distress, and God lets fall this or the like promise into thy heart, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,' Heb. xiii. 5, which quiets and contents thy mind. This is an answer; and observe such answers, for they are precious.

2. If whilst thou art a-praying God doth draw nigh to thy soul, and revealeth himself to it in and upon such or such a particular petition: as in case thou didst mainly intend, when thou didst begin to pray, to set thyself to beg some temporal mercy at his hands, some great matter for the good and prosperity of the church,—as Daniel, chap. ix., did set himself to seek God for the return of the captivity,—and even before thou comest to ask it, or in asking it, God smiles upon thee, welcomes thee, falleth about thy neck and kisseth thee; this thou art to observe as a sign he hears thy prayer, and accepteth both thee and it. When there is such a strong sense of God's favour and presence whilst thou art upon such a suit and request, more than at other times or than in other passages of the same prayer, this is a token God hears thee in that particular, and thou art to observe this his speaking to thy heart; when thus thou shalt no sooner come into his presence to inquire of him, but he says, 'Here I am,' as the promise is, Isa. lviii. 9. Therefore, Ps. lxix. 17, 18, 'Hear me speedily,' says David; 'and,' that I may know thou hearest me, 'draw nigh to me.' Therefore when God draws nigh to thee, it is a sign he hears thee. Daniel having fasted and prayed for three weeks together, chap. x. 2, 3, then an angel came, and one of the three Persons came and told him he was 'a man greatly beloved,' ver. 11, 19. When, in like manner, God by his Spirit comes down, and meets thee, and tells thy heart in secret that thou art his beloved and he is thine, then thy prayers are certainly heard; for if he accepts thy person, much more thy prayers, 1 John v. 13, 14. Men, false men,—false upon the balance, as David speaks, when they come to be tried and weighed,—they will, out of cunning, use suitors most kindly then when they mean to put them off, and deny them their requests; but God, who is truth and faithfulness itself, doth not use so to deal, but when he means to answer the prayer, he withal sometimes reveals his free grace most, to the end they may see and acknowledge the fountain of all to be his everlasting love, and so take the thing granted as a fruit of it, and thereby come to be the more abundantly thankful.

Only let me add this caution, which may be of great use to you: That it is not always infallibly true that when God draws nigh to you in a particular request, that that request in particular shall be granted in that manner you desired; but it is a certain evidence that thy prayer is heard, and that the thing thou askest is agreeable to his will, and that he approves of thee and thy request exceedingly, and thinketh the better of thee for it, and he will give thee it, or something that is better. There may be herein, and sometimes is, a mistake of God's meaning, to think that always then the thing

shall be granted when God draws nigh to a man: experience sometimes shews the contrary.

Quest.—But you will say, Why doth God draw so nigh if he means not to grant it?

Ans. 1.—He shews thereby his approving will of the thing prayed for. Now God approves many things he decrees not. There is his approving will and his decreeing will. God may shew his approving will of the thing thou askest,—as suppose it be in view a matter which is of great consequence to the church,—which he doth for thy encouragement; but yet it follows not that his decreeing will is for the accomplishment of that very thing in particular.

Ans. 2.—God may accept the person and the prayer when he doth not grant the thing prayed for; and by that drawing nigh witness his acceptation of thy person and thy prayer. Yea—

Ans. 3.—That revealing of himself is oftentimes all the answer he intended to such a prayer; and it is answer enough, too, to enjoy in the stead of a particular mercy the assurance of God's love. As suppose thou didst pray against some evil coming upon his church, which he yet intends to bring, which he did set thy heart a-work to pray against, thereby to manifest the sincerity thereof, and then he, seeing thee thus sincere, draws nigh to thee, and tells thee, however, it shall go well with thee, and that thou art greatly beloved of him; thou art sometimes to take this for all the answer he means to give. And this he doth sometimes also to content the heart, and prepare it for a denial in the thing; whereas otherwise the denial of what a Christian hath been earnest in might occasion, as in many it doth, a questioning and doubting of God's love.

3. When God stirs up in the heart a particular faith in a business, as sometimes he doth, and upholds the heart to wait for it, maugre all discouragements. So he did in David, Ps. xxvii. 3. David was then in great hazards by reason of Saul, or Absalom, and those such and so often, as that to sense and outward probabilities he was like never to live quietly again at Jerusalem, and enjoy God's ordinances there in peace; but for this David had prayed, and had made it as the grand request of his whole life,—as every man hath some one great request of all other, even as he hath some special grace above all other, or gift, &c., so request to God, next to his salvation, as haply for his ministry, or the like, therefore says David, ver. 4, 'This one thing have I desired,'—and accordingly God gave him a special faith in this thing above all other, because it was his great request; 'In this will I be confident,' ver. 3. And though a host of men should again and again encompass me, says he, yet in this I will be confident, that I shall still escape, and see Jerusalem again, and enjoy the ordinances and live in peace. And though his faith failed him often, as in the persecution of Saul it did, for he said he should 'one day perish by the hand of Saul,' 1 Sam. xxvii. 1, yet at other times his faith was marvellously upheld, and he was confident in this. He used not to be so in other requests thus absolutely, particularly, and distinctly; and therefore he says, 'In this,' &c. As there is a witness of the Holy Ghost immediate to the heart, sealing up adoption to a man's person, so in some cases there is the like testimony for the obtaining of some eminent thing we have asked. Which particular special faith doth in a kind of similitude answer to the faith of miracles of old, whereby a man had a particular confidence that God would do such a miracle by him. So in and by means of prayer, in some things there may be a particular strengthening and assuring the heart, that God will do such a thing for a man: which I confess

is rare and extraordinary, as also that immediate testimony concerning our persons is, which many want that go to heaven. And haply this other, concerning the accomplishment of special mercies, is much more rare, and but in some businesses, and is a thing which some men are not acquainted with, but yet may be in some cases existent to some men's spirits, as it was to David's in the thing mentioned.

And concerning this also I will also add a caution, as about the former: That it doth not always fall out upon all such kind of evidences made to a man's spirit, and that by God, that the thing prayed for doth come to pass. For these very persuasions stirred up by God, may be and are often but conditional, though thus immediately made to a man's spirit, and are so to be understood, and not peremptory and absolute. It cannot be imagined that all these should always be of greater absoluteness and peremptoriness than were many of those revelations made by God to the prophets, wherein he manifested his gracious purpose towards such a man or people, either to vouchsafe them such a mercy, or bring such a judgment; which forewarnings, though they were particular and express, yet limited and intended with a condition, according to the performance or not performance of which it fell out, either the judgment expressly threatened was diverted, or that good thing which was as directly and fully promised was not bestowed: as it was in the case of Jonah threatening the destruction of Nineveh; and so in the promise concerning Eli's house, 1 Sam. ii. 30, 'I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever:' but now the Lord says it shall not be so, for they had broken the condition which was implied in it, they had despised the Lord; 'and them that despise me,' says God there, 'I will despise.'

In like manner is God's meaning expressed towards us in such like persuasions wrought in us by prayer, to be understood: as that such mercies will surely come to pass, but still under a condition of obedience, and performing of those vows which a man joined with those his petitions, to move the Lord to grant the things; which if a man fail in, or ceaseth to go on to believe, it may and doth often come to pass that things fall out contrary to that persuasion; and then we are apt to question whether it was from God or no; which it might be, and truly wrought by his Spirit, and yet not always absolutely meant,—that was your mistake so to take it,—but conditionally only. For in such great requests of the soul unto God, there use to pass mutual covenants between God and us, and indentures are drawn and sealed unto by us—that is, we in prayer offer and promise to do thus and thus, if God will vouchsafe us such a mercy, and plead it to God to move him to bestow it; and God, he thereupon, it may be, seals a covenant on his part to grant the thing, and works such an undoubted persuasion; but if we, in that interim of waiting for that mercy, do deal falsely in that covenant which we have made, and this even whilst we are yet in dependence upon God for it, whereby it appears that we would have done so much more after we should have received it once,—in this case God denies the thing, and yet notwithstanding that persuasion and evidence was from God that heard the prayer. He said indeed he would do thus and thus for thee,—as he told David, 'I would have given thee much more,'—because thou saidst to him, thou wouldst walk thus and thus, or didst vow this or that to him; thou failest in thy word, upon which God uttered his; and thereupon, says God, as to Eli, 'Now it shall not be so,' and yet God had spoken it afore, and not Satan, nor thine own heart only.

4. When God doth put a restless importunity into the heart, maugre all

discouragements. So in that Psalm xxvii. 4, 'One thing I have desired, and I will seek after it,'—that is, as I have sought it, so I will not leave seeking to God for it. When God maintains this in the heart, it is a sign he hears and will answer; for you know the parable, that the unjust judge heard her for her importunity: therefore when God puts an importunity into the heart, he means to hear.

Only this likewise is to be added in this, there is a double importunity: one out of such an inordinate desire to a thing, as the heart knows not how to be without such a mercy, and so continues to ask, but 'asketh amiss, and so receives not,' James iv. 3. But there is an importunity joined with a subjection to God's will, which, when it runs along with it, then God hath stirred it up; and then look for something to come: otherwise you may be importunate, as 'they seek me daily,' when yet God heard not, Isa. lviii. 2.

CHAPTER VI.

Further observations to be made on the dispositions and carriage of our hearts after prayer, until the issue of the thing prayed for.

NEXT: *after* thou hast prayed, observe what God doth towards thee.

As, *first*, how he doth guide thy feet and heart after praying; there is much in that. That which was the spirit of supplication in a man when he prayed, rests upon him as the spirit of obedience in his course; so as that dependence he hath upon God for the mercy he seeks for, is a special motive and means to keep him fearful of offending, and diligent in duty; to look to his paths, to walk and behave himself as becomes a suitor, as well as to come and pray as a suitor. Thus David, he walked by this principle, Ps. lxvi. 18, 'If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me;' that consideration still came in as a curb unto sin; and without this a man provokes God, and so casts himself behindhand again, and by sinning loseth what ground he had got by praying. Therefore David, Ps. cxliii. 8–10, when he was to pray, even as for his life, as then he did, it being a deliverance from his enemies he sought, he specially prays God to direct him and keep him, that he might not sin against him; for he knew by sinning he should enervate and spoil all his prayers: not only 'hear me speedily,' says he, but also 'cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; teach me to do thy will.' This he especially prays for, and more than for deliverance, for else he knew God would not hear him. Therefore when thou art in treaty with God for any mercy, observe, doth God still after praying keep thee in a more obedient frame of spirit? It is a sign he intends to answer thee; as in like manner, when he keeps thee from using ill means, &c. When he meant to give David the kingdom, he kept him innocent, and his heart tender, that it smote him but for 'cutting off the lap of Saul's garment:' he was not so tender after. Therefore, in Ps. xviii., when he was delivered from all his enemies, he says, 'God dealt with him according to his uprightness; for I kept myself from mine iniquity.' So also, Ps. xxvii. 11.

Secondly, When God after prayer strengtheneth the heart to wait for the mercy; so, Ps. xxvii. 14, David having prayed, says to his soul, 'Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he will strengthen thy heart.' Honest men, when they nourish hopes in one that is in dependence on them, who waiteth and is obsequious upon the hopes he hath of a suit, use not to deny him: it were dishonesty in them to keep a man underhand, and then frustrate his expectations; therefore, when God keeps thy soul after praying in such a dependent frame, look for some good answer. And indeed when a man hath prayed long, in the end he begins to wait, as I may so say, rather than pray, though he pray still, because now he looks God should perform. Before,

and at first, he told the Lord he desired it, but now he can with some boldness tell him that he waits for it and expects it. The hope of a godly man and his expectation should make him ashamed if it were not answered, therefore in this case answers use to come.

Both these two last we have together joined, Ps. xxxvii. 34, '*Wait on the Lord*, AND KEEP HIS WAYS, and he shall exalt thee.'

CHAPTER VII.

Observations to be made after prayer, upon the issue of what was prayed for; and, first, if accomplished, whether as the fruit of prayers, or out of common providence.—Helps herein.

WHEN a man hath thus waited, and kept his way, then let him observe the issue and conclusion of what he sought for, how things are cast by God. Now of necessity, one of these two must fall out, that either the thing desired is accomplished, or not accomplished; and in either of these he may come to spy out answers to his prayers, for prayer may be answered though the thing be not done.

I mean to insist severally on these :—

I. If the thing thou prayest for doth come to pass, then what needest thou doubt of an answer, and whether God heard thee or no? for thou beholdest it with thine eyes. And so often it falls out, that God doth grant according to the desires of a man's heart; and not only so, but also fulfils his counsel therein, as it is Ps. xx. 4; that is, fulfils not only his desire and aim of his prayer, but in that very way, by that very means, which his judgment and counsel pitch upon in his own thoughts. The desire of the heart may be satisfied when God gives some other thing, but the counsel of the heart is then fulfilled when a man is answered in that particular which his own judgment pitched upon as best for him. For counsel is an act of the understanding, deliberating about means to an end, and directing to choose a particular means tending to an end: so that, as Eliphaz says to Job, chap. xxii. 27, 28, 'Thou shalt make thy prayer to God, and he shall hear thee: and decree a thing, and it shall be established to thee;' that is, a man is guided to decree and pitch upon such mercies in his prayers as God makes good in particular: he says what he would have, and God performs it; and this privilege thou shalt have, says Eliphaz there, if thou wilt turn to him, and be acquainted with him, and receive the law from his mouth. Thou shalt not err in praying; but what thou settest upon to pray for, shall be accordingly granted to thee. Such a man shall have the privilege *fingere sibi fortunam* in a right sense, to be his own chooser, and carver of his own mercies; and as Christ said, 'Be it according to thy faith,' so God says sometimes, 'Be it according to thy prayers.' And Eliphaz speaks of it as of a special favour, that whereas other prayers are answered obliquely, thine, says he, shall be answered directly, which is more comfortable, as direct beams are, and have more heat in them than collateral and oblique. Thus if a man will hear God and obey him, God will hear him: for if a man be subject to Christ's kingly office, his prophetical office shall guide him, and cause him not to err in his petitions; but by an unerring providence and preinstinct infused by his Spirit, God will so guide him as to ask even that very thing which God intends to give · whereas of himself he knows not what nor how to ask.

So David asked long life, and God gave it him, Ps. xxi. 2–4. God not only gave him his heart's desire, but 'the request of his lips,' ver. 2. Hannah asked a son, and God answered her in the very thing she desired, and therefore she called him Samuel, 1 Sam. i. 20, 'Because,' says she, 'I asked him of the Lord;' and ver. 27, 'For this child I prayed, and the Lord' did not give another thing instead of it, but 'hath given me my petition I asked of him.' So, 1 Chron. iv. 10, 'Jabez called on God,' it is said, 'and God granted him the thing he requested.' And thus God often deals with his children. And to this end hath God given us his Spirit; and made Christ wisdom unto us, who knows what is good for us, though we do not; and hath, therefore, also commanded us to spy out mercies for ourselves, and then come to him for them: and to this end hath made such particular promises of particular mercies, which he would have us have an eye unto in our prayers; all which is because often he means to bestow the very things we ask.

And yet because although we have the very things we did ask and desire, such is the jealousy and infidelity of our hearts, that we often discern not nor acknowledge that it was our prayers that obtained them from God; but we are apt, when once we have them, either to look but to things below and the second causes of them, though before we did earnestly seek them of God, or else still distrustfully to question whether or no it was at our prayers that he granted them, or out of common providence. Thus Job, in his distemper, chap. ix. 16, 'As though I had called, and God had answered me; yet,' says he, 'I would not believe that he had hearkened to my voice,'—that is, not that he did it in respect to my prayer and request, because he now deals so severely with me,—'for he breaketh me with a tempest,' ver. 17. And thus do our distrustful hearts, which are apt to be unsatisfied with all the clearest pledges of God's favour, and still to misconstrue and pervert them; although God doth answer us upon our calling upon him, yet we will not believe that he hearkened to our prayer in it. Therefore that you may be further enabled to discern how and when things you have prayed for come in by prayer, I give you these further directions:—

Direct. 1.—When God doth a thing in answer to prayers, he often doth it in such a manner that his hand may be in a more than ordinary manner seen in it. There are few prayers, wherein a man hath sought God much, but in the answers of them God discovers himself much, and turns many great wheels in the accomplishment of them, and 'manifests,' as David desires, Ps. xvii. 7, 'his marvellous loving-kindness;' and indeed when God hears prayers that have been a long while a-making, he shews usually half a miracle one way or other.

Now God discovers his immediate hand in the answers of prayers many ways:—

(1.) When he carries a thing through many difficulties; when there were a great many cross wards in a business prayed for, the least whereof would have kept the key from turning, when God shall make, as it were, a key on purpose to unlock it; when God plots and contrives all the passages in a business thou didst pray for, and so accomplisheth it; this is a sign it is a fruit of prayer, and that prayer had been a-making that key all that while. So in bringing David to the kingdom; Joseph out of prison; Mordecai to honour; and likewise St Peter out of prison, which was done at the prayers of the church, Acts xii. He was sleeping between two soldiers, if they had waked he had been discovered; and he was in chains, but they fall off, ver. 6, 7; and the keepers stood before the door, but they mind him not, ver. 6; and when one watch is passed, he passeth quietly through another, ver. 10;

and when both these were passed, an iron gate flies open of its own accord, ver. 10. Now such difficulties are there in many businesses, which yet in the end are accomplished by prayer; iron chains fall off, iron gates, enemies' hearts fly open of their own accord; and though not in that miraculous manner, by the means of an angel, yet no less wonderfully.

(2.) Or, secondly, when God facilitates all means to accomplish the thing which was prayed for, so as all means do in view conspire and combine in it; that thou hast wind and tide, and a fair day, and all the way paved, or, as David says, hast thy 'way made plain before thee;' and there falls out a great conjunction and meeting of many circumstances together to effect it, which had influence into it, whereof if any one had been wanting, haply the thing had not been done: when the thing prayed for is thus granted, prayer then hath done it. Thus, when he delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt, which was the accomplishment of their long desires and prayers,—'their cry came up,' the text says,—how were all things facilitated! They that detained them do themselves come and entreat them to go out; yea, 'are urgent,' says the text, and that at midnight; nay, hire them to go out with their ear-rings, Exod. xii. 31, 33, 35; and Pharaoh himself then parts lovingly and fairly with them, and desires their prayers, 'Bless me also,' ver. 32. Yea, to shew there was no resistance, the text says, 'a dog did not move his tongue:' the brute creatures did not disturb them, though at midnight, when those creatures use to be most obstreperous through noises.

(3.) When he doth it suddenly, and accomplisheth the thing thou hast long prayed for, ere thou art aware of it; as the return of the captivity of Babylon, which was the conclusion of many prayers, was done in a trice, 'they were as men in a dream,' Ps. cxxvi. 1, they could scarce believe it was so when it was done: it was because they had sown many prayers, which came up on the sudden, ver. 5, 6. So Peter, he was fast asleep, and did not so much as dream of deliverance. So Joseph's delivery out of prison, and advancement to be the greatest man in the kingdom, the suddenness of it shewed it was God's remembering of him, and hearing his prayers.

(4.) When God grants the thing with an overplus above what we did ask, and casteth many other mercies in, together with that which we long prayed for; this also may be a sign God did hear our prayers in it; for when he doth hear indeed, he useth 'to do above what we did ask or think,' thereby the more to overcome the heart. So David asked 'long life,' and he gave him more than he asked, Ps. xxi. 2–5. So Solomon, he asked but wisdom, and he gave him more than he asked; 'peace, riches, honour,' and all, with it, 1 Kings iii. 12, 13. Hannah, she asked but 'one male child,' 1 Sam. i. 11, but God gave her three sons more, and two daughters, chap. ii. 21. When prayers are answered, usually mercies come thick, they come tumbling in; the thing we prayed for comes not alone: as when sins are punished, then miseries also they come like armies in troops upon us. As temptations likewise come together, and we fall into many of them at once, as St James speaks, chap. i. 2, thus do mercies also.

(5.) When the thing is granted by prayers, there is often some particular circumstance of providence concurrent with it, which is a token for good, and sealeth to us that it is from God; such often as a man himself takes notice of, and which others take notice of also. 'Shew me a token for good,' says David, Ps. lxxxvi. 17, 'that others may see it and be ashamed.' And such tokens doth God often make small circumstances to be. Things small in themselves may be *magna indicia*, great signs and tokens. For example, Moses and Aaron and the Israelites had long cried to God for the deliverance

of his people, and laid up many prayers; 'their cry came up,' as was said; and when God doth deliver them, what tokens were there of good, and of God's hand in it, and of his answer to their prayers? The text notes, as was observed before, that 'a dog did not bark at their going out,' Exod. xi. 7, which was a small circumstance, but it was *magnum indicium*, and so intended by God; for the text adds, 'that ye may know that God puts a difference between the Israelites and the Egyptians.' This was a token of God's hand, to overrule the tongues of rude brute creatures, that use to stir at such unusual noises and at travellers, especially in the night. So when Isaac and Abraham, and his servant also, had prayed for a wife for Isaac, see by what a token God shewed he had heard their prayers: Rebekah was the first that came out to the servant sent to bring a wife for him; and if she be the woman appointed for Isaac, says the servant, Gen. xxiv. 13, 14, 'let her offer me drink, and my camels also.' This was a small thing in appearance, but a great *indicium* of God's hand in it; and therefore the servant bowed at it, and worshipped. And the sign in itself was such as argued a good nature in her, and a kind, courteous disposition, which therefore, it may be, he singled out as a token of a meet wife, as a thing especially to be looked at in the marriage choice.

Direct. 2.—Again, the consideration of the time wherein the things we have asked are granted, may much help us to discern whether it be in answer to our prayers; for God, who doth all things in weight and measure, shews his wisdom and love as much in the season as in giving the thing itself. God considereth all times of thy life, and still chooseth the best and fittest to answer thy prayers in: 'In an acceptable time have I heard thee,' so Isa. xlix. 8. As David likewise says 'he prayed in an acceptable time,' Ps. lxix. 13. So accordingly God answers in the best and most acceptable time to us; for 'he waits to be gracious, for he is a God of judgment,' Isa. xxx. 18; that is, he is a wise God, that knows the fittest times and seasons wherein to shew kindnesses, and to deal forth his favours in.

As, *first*, it may be that at that very time when thou hast been most instant and earnest, yea, even whilst thou art a-praying, or presently after, the thing is done and accomplished. To this purpose is that of Isa. lxv. 24, that as sometimes 'he hears before they call,' which argues much love to give mercies unsought, so also 'whilst they are speaking I will hear,' and grant the thing, which argues no less love; and he culls out that time on purpose that they might rest assured that it was in answer to their prayer. Thus to assure Hezekiah his prayer was heard, God sent the prophet in unto him whilst he was a-praying and weeping, with his head turned towards the wall. So Isaac, going out to pray in the field, meets his Rebekah then a-coming, that blessing of a good wife being surely the great request temporal he was then in treaty with God for: this Rebekah was the fruit of many prayers. So when St Peter was in prison, the church being gathered together to pray for him, St Peter comes and knocks 'at the same hour,' Acts xii. 12–17. So as it often falls out herein, as to the ruler in the gospel, John iv. 52, who inquiring diligently, found that 'the same hour that Christ had said to him, Thy son liveth, his son recovered; and so he believed, and his whole household:' so also here, that sometimes the thing is done, or the news of it comes the same hour, or soon after, wherein a man was praying about it, and haply then when the heart was most stirred about it, more than at any time else. This is a sign it was an answer of prayers, and may help to confirm a man's faith in it, as that also did his.

Or, *secondly*, when it is the most acceptable and every way the fittest time

to have the thing granted: at that time when thou hadst most need, and when thy heart was most fit for it. For in answering prayers, God aims especially at two things: to shew his mercy, that a man might magnify and exalt that; and to have the heart satisfied and filled with joy and contentment in his answer, and the thing made sweet, and a mercy indeed to him: in brief, that his goodness might be delighted in, and his mercy exalted. And for these two purposes he culls out such times when we have most need, and also when our hearts are most subdued and our lusts mortified. For then we are fittest to relish his goodness alone, and not to be drawn away with the carnal sweetness that is in the thing. The one you have expressed, Isa. xxx. 18, 'He waits to be gracious, to have his mercy exalted.' The second intimated, James iv., 'Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, to consume upon your lusts.' Such prayers, whilst the heart is in this temper, the Lord denies, or defers in mercy till the heart be weaned.

For the *first* of these: As, suppose thou didst pray long for assurance of salvation, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and when thou hadst most need of it, either when 'thy spirit would have failed' without it, as Isa. lvii. 16, or against some great affliction approaching, or some great encounter with the world for the name of Christ, then God filled thy heart with it, &c., that was the fittest time: now hath God heard thy prayer. As St Peter, he was in prison, and had been so for many days; as appears by the 4th and 5th verses, Acts xii. God could have delivered him all that while the church prayed for him, ver. 5. But God kept him in on purpose till that very night, when in the next morning Herod meant to bring him forth to execution, and then God delivered him at the prayers of the church; then was the most fit time: as the Psalmist says, 'the full time to have mercy on him was come,' Ps. cii. 13. And then to receive an answer is a sign God did it out of special love, which love he 'would have exalted by thee,' as Isa. xxx. 18.

If, *secondly*, when thy heart was most fit for the mercy, it was granted, then art thou also heard in an acceptable time: for God doth not withhold mercies from those that are his out of want of love; neither so much for what is past, as for the present evil disposition of their hearts, whereby they are unfit to receive them: and in this sense likewise may that be understood, that God prepareth the heart and heareth the prayer, Ps. x. 17.

As when thy heart is most weaned from that temporal mercy, supposing it such, granted thee upon seeking of it. So David, when had he the kingdom in possession given him? Then when he was as a weaned child, and had his high thoughts, which haply at the first news of it had risen in his mind, purged out, Ps. cxxxi. 2, 'I have no high thoughts,' &c., says he then. Thus when thy heart had let all carnal ends go, and had betaken itself alone to God, for thy portion to be had alone out of him, then the thing prayed for comes to pass; this was the fittest season.

Obj.—But you will be ready to say, To have a thing when my heart is taken off from it, and even contented not to have it, makes it to be as no mercy; for where there is no desire there is no rejoicing.

Ans.—If thy desire be taken off the thing, then thou wilt rejoice the more in God now; and though the thing of itself should now give thee less satisfaction, yet God by the thing will give thee more, and he will make it up: for thou wilt relish his love and sweetness in it now, which is better than life, and therefore much better than that thing enjoyed; and indeed the violence of the desire before would have made it less sweet, for the thing alone would not have filled and contented that desire when it was an inordinate lust, and so thou wouldest have been vexed with it, rather than satis-

fied, and found a greater vanity in it: but now when it is become a subordinate desire unto God, that the desire is down, and the heart quieted and contented with God in the thing, the heart says, as she said, 'I have enough.' So likewise thou mayest have an affliction thou prayedst long against taken off then when thy heart was most willing to accept thy punishment, Lev. xxvi. 41, as Moses's phrase is, and to submit to God in it.

Direct. 3.—A third thing you are to observe concerning the accomplishment of the thing prayed for, whereby you may discern whether granted in answer to prayers, is, when thou seest God in his dealings with thee, and answering of thee, to deal in a kind of proportion with thy manner of praying and seeking of him, and of walking with him whilst thou wert dependent on him, for such or such a mercy. And as you may see a proportion between sins and punishments, which are the rewards of them, that you can say, Such a sin brought forth this affliction, it is so like the father; so you might see the like proportion between your prayers and your walking with God, and God's answers to you, and his dealings with you. So did David, Ps. xviii. 24, 'According to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me,' &c. His speech notes some similitude or likeness; as, for example, the more by-ends or carnal desires you had in praying, and the more you mingled of these with your holy desires, and the more want of zeal, fervency, &c., were found in your prayers, the more you shall, it may be, find of bitterness mingled with the mercy, when it is granted, and so much imperfection and want of comfort in it. So says David in the same psalm, ver. 25, 26, 'With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure.' Pure prayers have pure blessings; *et è contra*, 'With the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.' And again, as you in praying sometimes slackened and grew cold, so you might see the business in like manner to cool, and cast backward: as 'when Moses's hands were down, Amalek prevailed;' but when they were 'lifted up, Israel had the better,' Exod. xvii. 12. God let him see a proportion, which argued his prayer was the means of prevailing. A man finds in praying that his suit sometimes sticks, and goes not on as he expected; this is because he gives not so good a fee as he was wont, and doth not ply God and solicit him; but, on the contrary, when he was stirred up to pray, then still he found things to go well. By this a man may clearly see that it was the prayer which God did hear and regarded. Thus, likewise, when a man sees hills and dales in a business, fair hopes often, and then all dashed again, and the thing in the end brought to pass, let him look back upon his prayers. Didst not thou in like manner just thus deal with God? When thou hadst prayed earnestly, and thought thou hadst even carried it, then dash all again by interposing some sin, and thus again and again? Herein God would have you observe a proportion; and it may help you to discern how and when they are answered and obtained by prayer, because God deals thus with you therein in such a proportion to your prayers.

CHAPTER VIII.

Seven observations more, from the effects which the accomplishment of the mercy hath upon the heart, &c.

Direct. 4.—FOURTHLY, Thou mayest discern whether they be in answer to thy prayers by the effects upon thy heart. As—

(1.) If the thing that is granted upon thy prayers draw thy heart more near unto God, it is then certain that it was granted as an answer to thy prayers. Things granted out of ordinary providence only do increase our lusts, and are snares to us, as Saul gave David his daughter Michal to be a snare to him; so their full tables are made snares, Ps. lxix. 22; so God gave the Israelites their will, the things they desired, but withal gave them up to their lusts, Ps. cvi. 15: he gave them their requests, but sent leanness into their souls. The quails might fat some of their bodies that survived, yet their souls grew lean; there was a curse upon their spirits; this new delicate food made their bodies more lustful, they did eat and drink, and rose up to play, Exod. xxxii. 6. But things obtained by prayer are sanctified to us, for every thing is sanctified by prayer, 1 Tim. iv. 5, so as it shall not ensnare nor entangle our hearts. A thing obtained by prayer, as it came from God, so a man will return it to God, and use it for his glory: so Hannah having obtained Samuel by prayer, she returns him unto God, 1 Sam. i. 27, 28, 'For this child I prayed; and God gave me my petition: and therefore also I have lent him to the Lord as long as he liveth.' If therefore thou findest this his dealing with thee in answering thee to be a kindly motive to cause thee to mourn for sin, and to be as a restraint against sin, it is a sign it was the fruit of prayer. Thus it wrought with David, Ps. vi. 8, 'Away from me, ye that work iniquity; God hath heard the voice of my weeping.'

Also, if thou rejoicest in God more than in the thing obtained;—so Hannah begins her song when she blesseth God for her child, 'My heart rejoiceth in the Lord,' &c., 1 Sam. ii. 1; she rejoiceth not so much in the gift as in the giver and his favour; more in this, that her prayer was answered, than in the thing obtained;—this is a sign of having obtained the mercy through prayers, when it is thus sanctified unto a man's spirit.

(2.) Prayers answered will enlarge thy heart with thankfulness, and thus usually they do. Self-love makes us more forward to pray than to give thanks, for nature is all of the craving and taking hand: but where grace is, there will be no eminent mercy gotten with much struggling but there will be a continued particular thankful remembrance of it a long while after, with much enlargement; and as prayers abounded, so will thanksgiving abound also. Hannah she makes a song, 1 Sam. ii. 1. Great blessings that are won with prayer are worn with thankfulness: such a man will not ask new, but he will withal give thanks for old. Thankfulness, of all duties, proceeds from pure grace; therefore, if the Spirit stirs thee unto it, it is a sign he made the prayer. 'What thanks shall I render to God for

the joy I have in you?' saith St Paul, 1 Thess. iii. 9, 10. So in all his other epistles, all those he writes to, as he prays for them, so he tells them he gives thanks for them, and for their graces which he had prayed for. And if answering prayers for others makes St Paul so thankful, what when for himself? Prayer and thanks are like the double motion of the lungs; the air that is sucked in by prayer is breathed forth again by thanks. Is thy heart afresh enlarged, as to mourn for past sins long since committed, so in like manner for past mercies won with long prayers, and this for a long while after? it is a sign that they were obtained by prayer.

(3.) If the mercy obtained doth encourage thee to go to God another time, to pray again the more confidently and fervently, it is a sign thou hast got the former that way; for the Holy Ghost having once shewed thee this way of procuring mercy, hence it is thou art thus ready to take the same course another time. Ps. cxvi. 2, 'The Lord hath heard me, and I will call on him as long as I live.' I know, says he, now what course to take, if I be in any want, even to call upon him; and he calls upon others to do so too.

(4.) When, God having heard thy prayers upon solemn vows made by thee, thy heart is made careful to pay those vows which thou didst make in the time of thy suing to God for that mercy; this may be an argument to thee, the thing being granted, that thy prayer was heard. For—

First, It argueth that thy heart itself doth secretly make such an account, that upon them God did grant the thing, and thou doest therefore make conscience to return all again to God in service, as the condition of thy indentures made with him, and as a homage due, and an acknowledgment for ever that such a mercy was won by prayer; and by this preservest the memory of the receipt of that mercy, vows being of the nature of homage. And—

Secondly, In this also it is an evidence that the thing was obtained by prayer: in that God calls for those vows from thee, by his Spirit in thy heart, and stirs thee up to perform them, it argues that, in relation to thy prayers answered, he takes them as dues from thee; that having despatched thy suit, he now calls for what was agreed to be given him when it should be performed. And—

Thirdly, In that also he doth accept the payment of these thy vows of thee, he acknowledgeth that those vows and prayers were heard; for as Manoah* said in another case, Judges xiii. 23, 'If he meant to have destroyed us, he would not have accepted a sacrifice,' so in this case it may be said, if God had not heard thy prayers, he would not have accepted thy vows after thy praying. Thus David, Psalm lxvi. 13, 14, 'I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in my trouble.' The reason follows, ver. 17, 19, because that 'verily God hath heard me when I cried to him.' And so Eliphaz in Job doth connect and hang these two together, chap. xxii. 27, 'Thou shalt make thy prayer to him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows.' This which he speaks of paying his vows was not only as it was to be his duty, but also as a consequent that would follow the other,—that when his prayers should be heard, he thereupon would perform his vows; for his scope is to move Job to turn to God, shewing what benefit would accrue to him by it, and amongst others this, the hearing his prayers and performing his vows.

(5.) When thou art enabled by faith to see clearly God's hand shewed forth in the effecting of that mercy over and above the power of second causes, and to acknowledge it to his glory; for the truth is, one main cavil-

* Manoah's wife.—ED.

ling reason in our blind hearts, whereby we are usually hindered and put by from apprehending our prayers to be answered when yet the thing is done, we shall find to be, that our eyes are terminated and bounded in second causes, and not raised to see God's hand in the thing: therefore, on the contrary, when God enableth thee to see that he hath done thee this kindness, so as thy mind is clear in it, this is a fruit of his hearing thy prayers; and this you will usually find to be true, that so much faith and dependence as you had upon God in prayer for the obtaining of a mercy, so much faith and acknowledgment you will have in the accomplishment of it. Parallel with this rule is that other, which in another case is usually given: that in performance of duties, so much as the soul did go out of itself to God for strength to perform them, so much, when they are performed, will the heart acknowledge God's assistance and be humbled. And this is a sign of prayer being heard upon this ground, because God's end of hearing prayers is that we 'might glorify him.' So, Ps. l. 15, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' Therefore, when the heart hath prayed much for a mercy, with dependence before the obtaining of it, and then is enabled to exalt God when it is obtained, it is a sign that God did it in relation to those prayers. For there is that connexion made between these as between the cause and the effect: 'I will hear thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' David, when he was delivered out of all his troubles, as when he made that 18th Psalm he was, as appears by the title of it, then at the 6th verse he relates how he had prayed, and how he was heard: and see thereupon how his heart was enlarged to acknowledge God alone to have done all, in the rest of that psalm; so from the 27th and also from the 31st verses. When we see angels from God, beyond the power of second causes, descending, it is a sign that prayers, as angels, first ascended, and obtained that mercy. Thus also the church, Isa. xxvi., having obtained those deliverances by prayer, ver. 17, (for which there she makes that song by way of thankfulness,) she ascribes all unto God: ver. 12, 'Thou hast wrought all our works for us;' and, ver. 18, 'Verily we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth.'

(6.) When with the mercy there cometh the assurance of God's love, and an evidence of his favour; when God sends not a bare token only, but a letter also with it, to bear witness of his love, in which the token is wrapt. I need not make that a sign, for when this comes with a mercy, it carries its own evidence; you will then know well enough that it is the fruit of prayer.

(7.) Lastly, it will be evident by the event. Things obtained by prayer have few thorns in them, the curse is taken out; but what comes but by ordinary providence comes as it were up of itself alone, and, like the earth untilled, is full of thorns and briars, and many vexations. The reason is, for what comes in by prayer comes as a blessing, and so no sorrow is added to it; and also because prayer killeth those inordinate lusts which are the cause of that vanity and vexation which are in the things enjoyed. But when 'the blessing of God maketh rich, he addeth no sorrow with it,' Prov. x. 22. Things long deferred, at last obtained by prayer, prove most comfortable, and in a settled manner such; they prove standing and stable blessings: and what trouble the heart was put to in the deferring, it is recompensed by the more settled, constant, unmixed sweetness in the enjoying; prayer having long perfumed it, and the thing being steeped therein, it proves exceeding pleasant. So, Prov. xiii. 12, 'Hope deferred makes the heart sick;' but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life, and heals that sickness, and abundantly

comforts the heart. Thus Isaac found Rebekah a great blessing, and a comfortable wife to him, Gen. xxiv. 67. Such a comfort also was Isaac to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 18, 19, 'a son indeed,' 'a son of laughter,' as his name signifies. And such was Samuel to Hannah; she had not only a son of him, but a good son, a blessed son, a prophet, and the judge of the people of God. Whereas Jacob getting the blessing, but without prayer, how embittered was it to him, though a blessing to him in the event, by twenty years' banishment from his mother's house! When Israel themselves set up a king, 'but not by me,' as God says, what a punishment was he to them! 'Given in wrath, and taken away in anger,' Hos. xiii. 11.

CHAPTER IX.

Considerations to quiet the heart, and to help it to discern an answer to, and acceptation of, the prayer when the thing is not accomplished.

II. BUT now the next and more difficult question is, when the thing is not granted, how shall we then discern and know that God doth notwithstanding hear the prayer?

Concerning which I must premise this, that it is true that always the very thing itself desired is not granted, when yet the prayer is heard. Christ prayed 'the cup might pass from him,' which though some interpret the word *passing* for the short continuance of the brunt, and that therefore in that respect he was heard directly in what he asked; yet if so, why was that clause, 'if it be possible,' added? That argues his petition was for a total removal, yet with subjection to God's will, for he knew there was no great impossibility in a short removal of it; nay, it was impossible but that it should pass, Acts ii. 24. But, howsoever, it is plain in Moses, about his going into Canaan, Deut. iii. 26: 'I besought the Lord,' says he, ver. 23, 'and he was angry with me, and would not hear me,' ver. 26. Likewise, ere I come to resolve the case, an objection is also to be removed; which is—

Obj.—That if the Spirit of God doth make every faithful prayer in us,—as, Rom. viii. 26, it is said he doth, 'We know not what to pray for, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities,' &c.; and he 'searcheth the deep things of God,' as it is said, 1 Cor. ii. 10,—that therefore he knowing that God will not grant such a thing, you may think that he should not stir up the heart to pray for that which God means to deny, but always guide the heart aright, and not let us err or miss in the things we pray for. To this, in brief, by way of answer:—

Ans. 1.—The Spirit makes not prayers in us always according to what God's secret will and foreknowledge is, but according to his revealed will to us, both in his word and in his providence, as things therein are presented to us, and do lie before our view, and so not always according to what he means to do, but according to what it is our duty to pray most for. For he concurs to assist us to pray, as he doth in preaching or using other such like means and ordinances, wherein though the Spirit know whom God means to convert, whom not, yet he assists us ministers in our spirits oftentimes as much to preach to those he means not to convert, as to those he means to convert; he dealing with us therein according to what is our duty, not according to what is his decree.

Ans. 2.—Again, secondly, that phrase helps to answer this, when he is said to 'help our infirmities;' and therefore not according to his own vast knowledge doth he frame our prayers, but so as he applies his assistance to our infirm, weak, and narrow apprehensions, and stirs up desires in us to such things as according to our knowledge we are in duty to conceive, and which by all we can see, by what is before us revealed in his providence, we

think to be most for our good and his glory; and God accepts such desires as from us, but yet doth for us according to the largeness of his own love.

And so now to come to the case propounded, and therein unto helps to pacify and direct the heart about those prayers at which the things are not granted.

1. And, first, how didst thou frame thy prayer for that thing which is denied thee? Didst thou pray for it absolutely and peremptorily, as simply best for thee? Thou must not then think much if such a prayer be denied, for therein thou wentest beyond thy commission. But if thou didst pray for it conditionally, and with an *if*, as Christ did,—'if it be possible,' (which instance is a strong ground for such kind of prayers,) and 'not my will, but thy will be done,'—so as thou didst refer it unto, and trust God's judgment in the thing, and not thine own, only didst put him in mind, as thy duty was, of what was represented to thee as best for thee in view, and so left it to him to cast, and didst refer it to his will and wisdom; then thy prayer may be most fully answered and heard, and yet the thing denied, and thou art to interpret and take God's meaning and mind revealed in the event in the best sense, which way soever it falls; for otherwise Christ had not been heard, when yet the text says 'he was heard in all he feared,' Heb. v. 7.

2. Observe if there were not a reservation in that denial, for some greater and further mercy, whereof that denial was the foundation. Thus—

(1.) Oftentimes some great cross is prevented by the denial of a thing which we were urgent for. If we had had many of our desires, we had been undone. So it was a mercy to David that his child was taken away, for whose life he was yet so earnest, who would have been but a living monument of his shame. It was also a mercy to David that Absalom was taken away, —whom surely he prayed much for, for he loved him much,—who, if he had lived, might have been the ruin of him and his house. As a wicked man's deliverance and the granting his request lays a foundation, and is a reservation of him to a worse judgment; so the denial of a godly man's prayer is for his greater good, and is laid as a foundation of a greater mercy. And again—

(2.) Oftentimes the very denial breaks a man's heart, and brings him nearer to God, puts him upon searching into his ways and estate, and in his prayers to see what should be amiss therein; which alone is a great mercy, and better than the thing, seeing by the loss of that one thing he learns how to pray better, and so to obtain a hundred better things afterward. Christ desired the cup might pass; it did not, and that was the foundation of our salvation, and the way to his glory, he being to pass through that suffering into his glory. The woman that had the bloody issue, though she used many means, and haply prayers among the rest, and all in vain, yet none took effect; that in the end she might come to Christ, and have both body and soul healed at once.

3. Observe if there be not a transmutation and a translation or turning of the thing desired into some other greater blessing of the same kind; for God, all whose ways are mercy and truth to his people, doth improve, husband, and lay out the precious stocks of their prayers to the best advantage, in things whereby the greatest returns and gains may accrue. As old Jacob laid not his hands of blessing as Joseph would have guided them, but laid the right hand upon the younger son, whom Joseph did set at his left; so often doth God take off his hand of blessing from the thing we prayed for, and lays and discovers it in another more for our good. And as God giving Isaac the power and privilege to bless a son, though Isaac intended it for

Esau, yet God unbeknown to him transmitted it to Jacob, yet so as the blessing was not lost. Thus is it in our prayers for blessings both upon ourselves and others. There is often a transmutation, never a frustration of them; which may as truly and directly be called an answer to the prayer, as if a factor beyond sea, when the owner sends for such and such commodities, supposing them more vendible and advantageous, but the factor knowing the state of things and the prices, sends him over, instead of them, such as shall sell better and bring in more profit, may be said to answer his letters, and that better than if he had sent those very commodities he writ for. Thus Abraham's prayers for Ishmael were turned for Isaac; David's for the child to Solomon.

4. Observe if in the end God doth not answer thee still according to the ground of thy prayer; that is, see if that holy end, intention, and affection which thou hadst in prayer be not in the end fully satisfied, though not in the thing thou didst desire; for God answers *secundum cardinem*, according to the hinge which the prayer turns upon. As when a general is sent out with an army by a king or a state, who give him many particular directions how to order and dispose and manage the war, although in many particulars that fall out, wherein they could not foresee to give so punctual and particular directions, he swerves from the directions, yet if he keeps to the intent of their commission, and doth what is most advantageous for their ends, he may be said to keep to his commission. For as they say of the law, *mens legis est lex*,—the mind of the law is the law, not the bare words it is printed in,—so the meaning of the Spirit is the prayer, Rom. viii. 27, and not simply the things desired, wherein we express those our desires. And still the meaning, the intent, the ground of our prayers shall be answered.

To open this: the main ends and meanings of our hearts in our requests are God's glory, the church's good, and our own particular comfort and happiness. We can desire but comfort; and a man looketh out and spieth out such a particular mercy, which he thinketh tends much to God's glory and his happiness, and yet that thing is denied; yet notwithstanding God will answer him according to the meaning of his prayers: his glory shall certainly be advanced, even for that prayer of his, some other way, and his comfort made up, which is the common desire of all mankind. And thou canst have but comfort, let the thing be what it will that conveys it to thee. And God will take order that that comfort thy soul desired thou shalt have come in one way or other, which, when it doth, thou canst not but say thy prayers are heard. For as God fulfils his promises, so he hears prayers; there is the same reason of both. Now God hath promised, 'He that leaves father and mother shall have a hundred-fold.' Not in specie, as we say: in kind this cannot always be fulfilled, for a hundred fathers he cannot have. God fulfils it not therefore always in the same kind, but in some other things, which shall be more than a hundred fathers would be.

Moses prays he might go into Canaan: God answers the ground of his prayer, though not in the matter in it expressed and desired, and that both for Moses's comfort and his own glory; for he takes him up into heaven, the true Canaan, whereof that Canaan was but a type; and he appoints Joshua, a fresh and a young man,* coming on in the world, and one whom Moses

* It is by a very common inadvertence supposed that Joshua was a young man when he was appointed to succeed Moses as leader of the hosts of Israel. Yet he was general of the army in fighting against Amalek, nearly forty years before this. At that time he could scarcely be under thirty-five years of age, and by many he is supposed to have been fifty-three at the Exodus. At the time of his appointment, then, he must have been at the least seventy-five, and may have been ninety-three.—ED.

himself had tutored and brought up, and was his pupil, servant, and attendant, Num. xi. 28. And this was more for God's glory, for Joshua was therein to be the type of Christ leading us to heaven, which the law, of which Moses was the type, could not bring us unto, by reason of the weakness of it; and he being young did it better; and it was not so much also for God's glory that one man should do all · and whereas Moses desired to have the honour of it, in that his servant that attended him, and had been brought up by him, and had all from him, that he was the man should do it, was well-nigh as great an honour to Moses as if he had been the leader himself. And so David, when he desired to build the temple and a house to God, for the like reasons God denied it, but yet honoured him to prepare the materials, and to draw the pattern, as also in that his son did it, who was therein also the like type of Christ, being a prince of peace, but David a man of blood and war; and likewise God accepted this of David, as if he had built it, and will recompense him as much.

5. Observe if in the thing which thou hast prayed much about, though it be denied thee, yet if God doth not endeavour to give thee (as I may so speak) all satisfaction that may be, even as if he were tender of denying thee, and therefore doth much in it for thy prayers' sake, though the conclusion proves otherwise, as being against some other purpose of his for some other ends: as when he denied Moses to go into the land of Canaan, he did it with much respect (as I may so speak with reverence) to Moses. He yielded as far as might be, for he let him lead them till he should come to the very borders; and he let him see that good land, carrying him up to a hill, and, as it is thought, by a miracle enabled his sight to view the whole land. And the man he chose to perform this work was his servant, which was a great honour to Moses, that one brought up by him should succeed him. So when Abraham prayed for Ishmael, 'O let Ishmael live in thy sight!' Gen. xvii. 18, God went as far in granting his request as might be; for, says he, ver. 20, 'I have heard thee; and I have blessed him, and I will make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly, and he shall beget twelve princes: but my covenant I will establish with Isaac.' So likewise, when in casting that thing thou didst seek at his hands, he shews an extraordinary hand in turning it, it is a sign he had a respect to thee, that he would vouchsafe to discover his hand so much in it. Let the thing fall which way it will, if God's hand appear much in it, thou mayest comfortably conclude that there is some great thing in it, and that prayer wrought that miracle in it to dispose it so; and that there is some great reason why he denies thee, and a great respect had to thy prayers, in that he is pleased to discover so extraordinary a providence about it.

6. Lastly, look into the effect of that denial upon thine own heart; as—

(1.) If thy heart be enlarged to acknowledge God to be holy and righteous in his dealings with thee, and thine own unworthiness the cause of his denying thee. Thus we often find the saints expressing themselves in their prayers. That Ps. xxii., though typically made of Christ, yet as it was penned by David, and as it may concern his person, it may serve for an instance for this: 'I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not;' this might have made him jealous of God, but says he, 'Thou art holy,' &c., and dealest now with me in a holy manner, and art just in it. Others 'have called on thee,' and have been heard, though I now for my unworthiness am denied; 'but I am a worm.' It might have put a man off when he should think others are heard, but not I; but it puts not him off, but humbles him: 'I am a worm,' &c., and 'Thou art holy.'

(2.) If God fill thy heart with a holy contentment in the denial; if he speak to thy heart, as he did to Moses when he denied him, Deut. iii. 28, 'Let it suffice thee;' if as to St Paul, when he was so earnest about removing that buffeting, if thou gettest but such an answer as that to him, 'My grace is sufficient,' or that some such like consideration is dropped in that stays thee. It was the effect of David's seven days' fasting that he did so contentedly bear the loss of the child, which his servants thought would have overwhelmed him, 2 Sam. xii. 19–21. But a consideration was dropped in, which was the fruit of his prayer, 'that he should go to him, not he return hither;' and his mind was comforted thereby, insomuch, as it is said, ver. 24, that 'he comforted Bathsheba also.'

(3.) If thou canst be thankful to God out of faith, that God hath cast and ordered all for the best, though he hath denied thee; and although thou seest no reason but that the thing prayed for would have been for the best, yet art thankful upon the denial of it, out of faith resting in God's judgment in it, as David in all those forementioned places was: 'Thou art holy that inhabitest the praises of Israel;' he praises God for all this. David, before he did eat, after his seven days' fasting for the child, arose, 'and went first into the temple, and worshipped,' 2 Sam. xii. 20; and of what kind of worship it was appears by his anointing himself and changing his raiment, which was in token of rejoicing and thanksgiving; and it fell out to him according to his faith, for presently after Solomon was begotten, ver. 24.

(4.) If thou canst pray still, and givest not over, although thou standest for mercies which thou missest; if when thou hast mercies granted thou fearest most, and when denied lovest most, and art not discouraged, thy prayers are heard. Ps. lxxx. 4, though God seemed angry with their prayers, yet they pray, and expostulate with him, and give not over, for they made that psalm as a prayer, 'And how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?' So, Ps. xliv. 17, 'Though we are cast among dragons, yet we have not been false in thy covenant.' So say thou, I will pray still, though I never have an answer in this life. It moves ingenuous natures to see men take repulses and denials well, which proud persons will not do: and so it moves God.

CHAPTER X.

Application: a reproof of those that pray, but look not after the return of their prayers.—The causes of this neglect.

THE use of all is to reprove those who put up prayers, and are earnest in begging, but look not after them when they have done, no more than if they had not prayed; who still venture, and have a great stock of prayers going, but look not after the returns that are made, cast not up their comings in and gainings by prayers; and when they have prayed, sit down discouraged, as not making account in earnest that ever they shall hear of their prayers again, even as if they had been but as words cast away, 'as beating the air,' as 'bread cast upon the waters,' which they think sinks or is carried away, and they shall find it no more. But herein you despise God's ordinance, and err, not knowing the power of prayers; and ye contemn the Lord. But you will say as they in the prophet said, 'Wherein do we contemn him?' If you asked a man a question, and when you had done did turn your back upon him, as scoffing Pilate asked in scorn of Christ, 'What is truth?' but would not stay for an answer, did you not contemn him? As not to answer when a question is asked you is contempt, so not to regard the answer made, when you have been earnest in begging, is no less contempt also. If you had written letters to a very friend about important business, and had earnestly solicited him for an answer, and he were careful in due time to send one, if you should make account to hear of him no more, should you not wrong him in your thoughts? Or if he did write, if you should not vouchsafe to read over his answer, were it not a contempt of him? So is it here, when you have been earnest with God for blessings, and regard not the answer. And because verily this is a fault among us, I will therefore endeavour to discover to you the causes and discouragements, which, though they keep you not from praying, yet from this earnest expectation, and real and true making account to hear of answers of your prayers. Only my scope is not to shew you so much the reasons why God denies you many requests, as why even in your own hearts you are discouraged after you have prayed, as if they would not be answered, although God doth answer them. These discouragements are partly temptations, partly sinful impediments, wherein we are more faulty.

1. Because your assurance that your persons are accepted is weak, therefore your confidence that your prayers are heard is weak also. For as God doth first accept the person, and then our prayers; so the belief that God doth accept our persons is that which also upholds our hearts in confidence that our prayers shall be granted. This you may find in 1 John v. 13–15: in the 13th verse he says, 'These things have I written to you, that ye may know you have eternal life;' and upon that assurance this will follow, ver. 14, 15, 'And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any-

thing according to his will, he hears us,' &c.; 'and if we know he hears us, we know we have the petitions we desired of him.' Mark how he links these three together, as effects and consequences each of other. (1.) 'These things I write unto you, that you may be assured that life and heaven is yours,' as in the 12th and 13th verses. And upon that, (2.) this confidence will follow in your hearts, 'that God hears you,'—that is, that you have his ears open to you, and his heart enlarged towards you. And then, (3.) if you be assured that God hears you, then from this will follow an assurance that you shall have anything granted you desire. Yea, and he makes this one of the main and immediate effects of assurance of justification; therefore he says, 'this is the confidence that we have in him,'—that is, this effect there is of this confidence. For whereas they might say, What benefit will accrue to us by this assurance? Why this, says he, which is one of the great and main privileges of a Christian, even assurance that God will hear him; and not only so, but grant him all his prayers. For when a man is assured God hath given him his Son, he will then easily be induced to believe and expect, 'How shall he not with him give me all things?' Rom. viii. 32. If once he looks upon God as a father, he will then easily conceive that which Christ says, 'If fathers that are evil can give good things to their children, how much more shall not your Father give his Spirit and all good things to them that ask them?' And if he gave his Son when we did not pray to him, how much more shall he not with him give us all things we pray for? If a man comes to sue to any man whose mind he knew not, whether he loved him or not, he would have small hope or expectation of having his suit granted, though he came again and again; but if he be assured he is in favour with him, according to that degree of favour he supposeth himself to stand in with him, he is assured and confident of obtaining his request.

2. Discouragement is the weakness of their prayers. Though a man thinks his person is accepted; yet, Alas! says he, my prayers are so poor and weak, as surely God will never regard them.

(1.) To remove which, let me first ask thee this question, Dost thou pray with all thy might? Then though that thy might be weak in itself, and in thine own apprehension such, yet because it is all the might which thou hast, and which grace hath in thee, it shall be accepted. 'For God accepts according to what a man hath, and not according to that he hath not,' 2 Cor viii. 12.

(2.) Thou art to consider that God doth not hear thee for thy prayers' sake, though not without them, but 'for his name's sake,' and his 'Son's sake,' and because thou art his child; as the mother when her child cries, suppose it be a weak child, doth not neglect to hear and relieve it, but tenders it, not because it doth cry more loud, but because it cries, and pities it the more the weaker it is.

(3.) Again, though the performance in itself be weak, yet considered as a prayer, it may be strong, because a weak prayer may set the strong God a-work. As faith for the act of it, as produced by us, may be weak, yet because its object is Christ, therefore it justifies: so is it in prayer; it prevails, not because of the performance itself, but because of the name which it is put up in, even Christ's name. And therefore, as a weak faith justifies, so a weak prayer prevails as well as a stronger; and both for the like reason in both, for faith attributes all to God, and so doth prayer: for as faith is merely a receiving grace, so prayer a begging grace. And therefore dost thou think thy prayers are accepted at all, notwithstanding their weakness? If that they are accepted, then they must be accepted as prayers. Now if

they be accepted as prayers, then as effectual motives to prevail with God to grant the thing you ask; for if he should not accept them to that end for which they were ordained, it is as if he accepted them not at all. As, therefore, when he approves of any man's faith as true and sincere, he approves and accepts of it to that purpose for which it was ordained, which is to save and justify, and to this end doth as fully accept the weakest act of faith as the strongest; so is it with their prayers, which being ordained as a means to obtain mercies from him, if he accepts them at all, it is with relation to the accomplishment of them, which is their end.

(4.) Men are mistaken in judging of the weakness of their prayers. They judge of the weakness of their prayers by their expressions, and gifts in performing them, or by the stirring and overflow of affections; whereas the strength and vigour of prayer should be estimated from the faith, the sincerity, the obedience, the desires expressed in it. As it is not the loudness of a preacher's voice, but the weight and holiness of the matter, and spirit of the preacher, that move a wise and an intelligent hearer; so not gifts, but graces in prayers are they that move the Lord. The strength of prayer lies not in words, but in that it is fitted to prevail with God. One prayer is not more strong than another, further than it is so framed as it hath power with God more or less; as of Jacob it is said, 'He had power with God,' Hos. xii. Now prayers move God, not as an orator moves his hearers, but as a child moves his father. Two words of a child humbled, and crying at his father's feet, will prevail more than penned orations, Rom. viii.: it is the meaning of the spirit that God looks unto, more than the expression; for the groans there are said to be unutterable. Hezekiah's expressions were so rude and broken, that he says, Isa. xxxviii. 14, that he did but 'chatter,' he being then sick, 'even as a crane;' yet God heard them.

3. A third discouragement is failings of answers: I have prayed often and long, and I have been seldom or never answered, and therefore I make little account of my prayers that they are heard; others have the revenues of their prayers coming in, but I do miss whatsoever almost I stand for. Therefore say they as those, 'Why have we fasted and thou regardedst it not?' Isa. lviii. 3.

To remove this, consider—

(1.) That thou hast the more reason to wait, for thou hast the more answers to come; for as wicked men treasure up wrath, so do godly men mercy, and especially by their prayers: and therefore mercies and answers do often come thick together, even as afflictions also do.

(2.) Suppose thou shouldest have few answers concerning the things thou seekest for here, either in praying for thyself or others, yet thy reward is with the Lord. It is in praying as in preaching, a man may preach faithfully many a year, and yet not convert a soul, and yet a man is not to give over waiting, but to observe after every sermon what good is done, and whether 'God will give men repentance,' as it is, 2 Tim. ii. 25. And if none be converted, yet, as Isa. xlix. 4, 'a man's reward is with the Lord.' 'Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour,' 1 Cor. iii. 8; and not according to the success of his labour only. So it is in praying: though thou missest again and again, and nothing succeeds thou prayest for, yet be not discouraged, for thy reward is with the Lord, which will come in one day.

(3.) God doth it, not that he hears thee not, but to try thee. For a man to say as David says, Ps. cxvi. 1, 2, 'God hath heard my prayer, therefore I

will call upon him as long as I live;' that is nothing so much as to be able to say, Well, I have prayed thus long, and for these many things, and never sped, and *yet* I will call upon him whilst I live, though I find no answer in this life. To find comings in in a trade, and yet to hold out trading still, argues not so much faithfulness in a man's calling, as when a man hath losses, and castings behindhand, and yet to follow it.

(4.) God usually stays so long that we have done expecting: Luke xviii. 8, 'The elect cry day and night,' but God stays so long, ver. 7, that when he comes he finds not faith, they have done expecting, have forgot their prayers, and then he doth things they looked not for, Isa. lxiv. 3.

Other discouragements there are wherein we ourselves are more faulty, and which are our sins more than our temptations, which yet weaken the expectation of having our prayers answered: as—

1. Slothfulness in prayer, when we do not put to all our might in praying; and then no wonder we do not only not obtain, but that our own hearts misgive us, that we look for little success and issue of such prayers: *qui frigide rogat, docet negare,*—he that shews himself cold in a suit, teaches him he sues to deny him. If we see one seeking to us faintly and slightly, we are not then solicitous to deny him, but think he will be easily put off, and not think much; so accordingly when we shall observe so much by ourselves, and see ourselves slothful in praying, and praying as if we prayed not, no wonder if by reason of that consciousness we look not after the success of such prayers, which in the performance we slighted, when we pray as if we were willing to be denied, we knowing that the Scripture says that the fervent prayer only prevails, that prayer which is ἐνεργουμένη, that sets all the faculties on work, James v. 16. How should we then expect that God should grant any good thing to us? For though God sells nothing to us for our prayers, but gives freely, yet he would have his gifts accepted; now without large desires and longings they would not be accepted. And what is fervent prayer but the expression of such fervent desires? Jacob wrestled when he obtained. 'Many *seek* to enter,' says Christ, 'but you must *strive*.'

Now when we know these things and yet are slothful, how can we expect any answers at all? Will not the consciousness of it quell all our expectations? And hence it comes to pass that God, proportioning his dealings with us to our prayers, because we seem to pray, and yet pray not to purpose; therefore God sometimes seems like one asleep, and then sometimes to wake, and make fair offers to help, and yet falls as it were asleep again, because we were thus drowsy in our prayers. Those prayers that awaken God must awaken us; those prayers that stir God must 'stir us to lay hold on God,' as Isaiah speaks. As obedience strengthens faith and assurance, so fervency in prayer begets confidence of being heard. In all other things slothfulness doth discourage and weaken expectation. Doth any man expect that riches should come upon him when he doth his business negligently? For 'it is the diligent hand that maketh rich.' Doth any man expect a crop and a harvest if he take not pains to plough and sow his corn? No more, if you do not take pains with your hearts in prayer, can you expect an answer, or indeed will you.

2. A second cause, or sinful discouragement herein, is looking at prayer only as a duty to be performed, and so performing it as a task, and not so much out of desires stirred up after the things to be obtained, nor out of faith that we shall obtain them; which is as if a physician having a sick

servant, to whom he prescribeth, and commandeth to take some physic to cure him, and his man should take it indeed because it is commanded and prescribed by his master, looking at it as an act of duty, as he obeys him in other businesses, but not as looking at it as a medicine or means that will have any work upon him to cure him, and therefore orders himself as if he had taken no such thing. Thus do most in the world pray to God; take prayer as a prescription only, but not as a means. They come to God daily, but as to a master only in this performance, not as to a father; and thus doing, no wonder if they look for little effect of prayers, for our expectation never exceeds nor reaches further than our end and intention which we had in any business. If I perform any ordinance but as a duty, then I rest therein and expect no further; as if a man preacheth for filthy lucre only, he performs his duty and then looks for his hire, but looks not after any other effect of his sermons: so nor will men do after their prayers for answers to them, when they perform them as duties only. Now, to help you in this, you are to look to two things in prayer: *first*, to a command from God; *secondly*, to the promise of God; and so to consider it in a double relation, first, as a duty, in respect to the command; secondly, as a means to obtain or procure blessings at God's hand, in relation to his promises. Therefore, in prayer, first an act of obedience, secondly an act of faith, is to be exercised: 'Ask in faith, nothing wavering,' James i. Now the most in the world perform it as an act of obedience only, and so rest in the present performance and acceptation of it; but if a man pray in faith, he will pray with an eye to the promises, and look on prayer as a means, for time to come, to obtain such or such a mercy at God's hands: and if so, then he is not satisfied till he hath an answer of his prayers, and till then will wait, as the church says, 'she would wait till he did arise and plead her cause.'

3. A third sinful discouragement is returning to sins after prayers. When a man hath prayed for some mercy, and riseth full of much confidence that his prayers are heard, and so a while he walks, yet falling into a sin, that sin doth dash all his hopes, undoes his prayers, as he thinks, and calls them back again—meets, as it were, with the answer, which is God's messenger, and causeth it to return to heaven again. How often when God had even granted a petition, and the decree was a-coming forth, and the grant newly written, and the seal a-setting to it, but an act of treason coming between, stops it in the seal and defers it, blots and blurreth all, both prayer and grant, when newly written, and leaves a guilt in the mind which quells our hopes, and then we look no more after our prayers. And this especially if, when we were a-sinning, such a thought came in, (as often it doth to restrain us,) Are you not in dependence upon God for such a mercy, and have prayed for it, and are fair for it? how then dare you do this, and sin against him? When in this case the heart goes on, this blots all the prayer, and discourageth a man; for, saith the conscience, will God hear sinners? as he said.

And thus far it is true that sinning thus between interrupts and hinders the obtaining our petitions: that answerably as we do thus dash and betray and undo our prayers, so in a proportion we find, in the way to our obtaining the thing we prayed for, so many rubs and difficulties do arise; for as we lay blocks in God's way coming towards us to do us good, so he in ours; therefore, often when a business goes prosperously on, and we think we shall carry it, comes some accident between the cup and the lip, that casts all behindhand again, because answerably we dealt with God. For when we had

prayed, and were encouraged and in good hopes, then by some sin or other we spoiled all, and bereaved ourselves of our expectation. But yet this you are to consider, that as in the end praying useth to overcome sin in God's children, so also God in the end overcomes difficulties, and brings the matter to pass. And know it is not sins past so much that hinder the prayers of God's people, as the present unfitness and indisposition of their hearts for mercy.

TIDINGS OF PEACE,

TO BE SPOKEN TO CONSCIENCES DISTRESSED.

God will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints, &c.—
PSALM LXXXV. 8.

main thing intended to be insisted upon out of these words is despatched; that I may not leave so fair and fruitful a crop still standing upon the nd unreaped, I will go on more briefly to have in the rest of that harvest ext affords.

his psalm, as was said, was penned as a prophecy of, and prayer for, the n of God's people out of the captivity of Babylon, and the settling and olishment of that church and state upon its former basis; yet so as therein e is a further and more especial aim had to the peace and glory to be ght in by Christ, till when this prophecy otherwise had but a poor and ler accomplishment, in regard of much outward glory or peace that that ch enjoyed.

nd therefore the peace here spoken of and promised for the present is e extended largelier than to outward prosperity, or a happy issue out of calamity; even to speaking peace to drooping and weather-beaten con- ices. And accordingly we find this kind of peace to have been specially ised by the prophet Isaiah to the people at their return out of the cap- y, both in chap. xlviii. 20–22, and chap. lvii. 14–21; there being many en hearts that had wanted the light of God's countenance long, having during the captivity banished from the ordinances of the temple, hanging heir harps mourning, whose thoughts were as if God had meant to de- r them,—as appears Jer. xxix. 11,—who afterwards were refreshed with rd peace at the restoration of those ordinances, as well as with outward, y those places doth appear. Therefore ir relation to this kind of peace I will at this time handle the words.

the words you have a discovery of God's proceedings in treating of e or proclaiming war with his people and subjects.

You see that sometimes God doth not speak peace to his own children. was their state for the present, when this psalm was penned: 'He will k peace;' therefore, at present he did not. Yea, it may incline us to k that God at present spake the contrary; for the prophet speaks this ith, as contrary to sense and present experience: he believes God in-

tends to come again to a treaty of peace, though now he seems to have nothing but anger, and blood, and war in his looks, speeches, and actions; and to threaten and proclaim war and take up arms against them. And thus God often deals with his own children, whether a people or a particular man: so with a nation, Isa. lxiii. 10, 'They rebelled, and he fought against them;' so with a particular man, God frowned upon and rated his child Ephraim, 'and spake bitter things against him,'—it is the phrase used, Jer. xxxi. 20,—though yet 'Ephraim is my pleasant child,' says he. David had not a good word from him a long time: Ps. li. 8, 'Make me to hear again of joy and gladness;' and, Ps. l. 7, 'Hear, O my people, and I will speak;' (but not against them, they might hope, because he owns them for his people;) 'Hear, O Israel, and I will testify against thee;' and yet it follows, 'I am the Lord thy God.' Job says he did not speak only against them, but also 'wrote bitter things;' he wrote, as it were, books against him, chap. xiii. 26, he writing over in his conscience the sins of his youth in letters of blood, and wrath and terrors for them.

2. There must needs be some great reason for this, they being his people; which is the second thing that is intimated, and may be observed out of these words: namely, the reason or moving cause provoking God thus to interrupt the peace of his people. They had fallen into some gross folly or other; some sinful, inordinate dispositions had been indulged unto and nourished in them; which is usually, though not always, the cause of this his dealing. This is evident by this, that the conclusion of their peace, when it is made up again, hath this clause, as the only article of reconciliation between them, that 'they return no more to folly;' implying they had formerly run out into some inordinacy, which to reduce them from, God had took up arms against them, and thereby taught them wisdom to take heed of losing, and then buying peace at so dear a rate again. And, indeed, all the quarrels that God hath against a nation, a particular place or person that belongs to him, do begin there: 'They rebelled, and he fought against them,' Isa. lxiii. 10; 'For the iniquity of his covetousness I was wroth,' Isa. lvii. 17.

Reason.—The reason is, for anger is out of love, as well as hatred; which therefore he expresseth, though with grief, he should be put to quarrel with those he hath set himself to love. And as wicked men, whom he always hates, may out of his patience have a truce; so, on the contrary, with his own, God may take up a quarrel; yet he loves them, and remembers them with everlasting kindness.

The uses of both are these:—

Use 1.—As peace with God is dear to you, so to take heed of turning unto folly. Only take this advertisement, that they are not mere follies or ignorances that do interrupt or break the peace. As it is not simply the outrage of some pirates that will cause two states at peace to enter into a war, unless that state consent to their act, and maintain them in their rapine; so it is not simply the rising of lusts that 'war in our members against the law of the mind,' that breaks the peace between God and us, unless they be approved of and consented unto, nourished and maintained with some presumption. Whilst we maintain and take up a constant fight against God's enemies in us, and disavow the outrageous risings of our lusts, the peace may hold, and often doth; for whilst we are not at peace with sin, God may be at peace with us and our spirits; but so much peace as we give them, so much war God takes up.

Use 2.—The second use is: Doth God take up quarrels against his own?

Then, upon any breach made, go forth to meet him. It is St Paul's exhortation, 'not to let the sun go down upon thy wrath,' but to reconcile thyself ere night with thy offended brother; but I turn the exhortation, 'Let not the sun go down upon God's wrath' towards thee; but every day make and renew thy peace with God, ere thou sleepest, that, as David says, 'thou mayest lie down and sleep in peace,' Ps. iv. 8.

Use 3.—The third use: If the peace of God's own people be thus often interrupted, who yet are 'the sons of peace,' Luke x. 6, what wrath is reserved for the 'children of disobedience,' Eph. ii. 2, and open rebels, that are children of wrath because of disobedience? 'There is no peace to the wicked, says my God,' Isa. lvii. God is a-preparing against thee, whoever thou art, that goest on in sin, 'if thou turn not,' Ps. vii. 12; thou art pressed for hell, and art thither bound, to encounter with the wrath of the great God, thither where no truce is to be had: 'There is no discharge in that war,' as Solomon says, Eccles. viii. 8. Think of this, you that sin, and will sin; whose peace is not struck up between God and you, who never yet so much as entered into any treaty of peace with God, who never apprehended God and yourselves at odds.

3. The third thing to be observed out of the text is this: That when the child of God wants peace, he can have no peace till God speak it. God must speak peace if ever his people have it; therefore, says he here, 'I will hear what God will speak.' He speaks in opposition to the voice of man and the help of second causes, and of all means whatever, which in time of distress of themselves can do no good.

Reason 1.—Because God is the king of all the world, the sovereign Lord of all. Now treaties of war and peace are the prerogative of kings, and of them alone: they may consult with their subjects about establishing good laws, as they use to do, &c.; but the proclaiming war and peace with foreign states they have ever held in their own hands; and so doth God, who is the King of kings.

Reason 2.—Because God is the judge of all the world, and the party offended, at whose suit all the arrests and controversies do come. Now when a condemned man stands at the bar, let all the standers-by say what they will, bid him be of good comfort, and tell him that his cause will go well, yet till he hear the judge himself speak as much, he cannot be at rest in his mind; the judge only can acquit him and absolve him. The king alone speaks pardons; and so doth God peace. All afflictions are his arrests; thou must therefore make thy peace with him, if thou wilt be at peace.

Reason 3.—Peace, especially of conscience, is a thing must be created, for our hearts of themselves are full of nothing but turmoil, as the raging sea, which cannot rest. 'I create the fruits of the lips, Peace,' Isa. lvii. 19; men may speak it, but I must create it. A word of power, such as went forth when light was created, must go forth from God, or else there is no peace; for otherwise our hearts are as the sea, that rests not.

Reason 4.—The wounds of conscience which are in God's people are of that quality that none but God can cure them; for the chief thing that wounds them is the loss of God's favour, not simply his wrath. For it is the glory of God and his favour, not self-love only, that makes them seek him; therefore nothing gives peace but the restoring of his favour and the light of his countenance; the same dart that wounded must heal again: Isa. lvii., 'I smote him, and I will heal him.' And as one that is sick with love, when love is the disease, no physic, no persuasion of friends can cure it, nothing but only the love of the party beloved; so when a soul is wounded

for the loss of God's love, not all the things in the world can cure the heart; but one word from him, one good look, one promise from him that we are his, stills all, and only can give peace. Like to a poor child that cries for its mother; let who will dandle it, and play with it, and use it never so kindly, yet it will not be stilled till the mother comes; so it is with a poor soul that cries after God day and night.

Use 1.—In case thou art in distress, especially of spirit, and want of peace of conscience, wait upon God in the use of means for peace. Friends may come to thee, and say, Why shouldest thou be troubled? Thou hast no such cause to be cast down. But all these are 'miserable comforters,' as Job said, unless God speaks peace. David heard by the prophet Nathan that his sin was pardoned, but yet his soul was not at quiet till God would second it immediately by his Spirit; therefore, says he, when Nathan had been with him, Ps. li. 8, 'Make me to hear of joy and gladness.' Art thou baited with hellish blasphemies cast into thy soul? God must speak peace, and rebuke Satan for thee, and take him off thee; all thy friends, all the men in the world cannot do it; they can only say, as the archangel said, 'The Lord rebuke thee.' And he can as easily do it as he did rebuke Laban, and forbade him speaking roughly to Jacob; the same charge he can give in an instant to Satan: therefore wait upon God, and look up to him.

Use 2.—Consider this against the time you come to die: all your desire is to die in peace; and, 'Oh, let thy servant depart in peace!' is the speech and desire of all. But who is it that must speak peace to you then? God only. At death you will send for a good minister, or a good friend, to give you some comfort, as you call it; but if God will not speak it, how can they? If you could call all the angels out of heaven, and all the saints both in earth and heaven, and so could have all that whole college of physicians about you, and they should desire to comfort you with all their cordials; yet if God will not speak it, who is able to do it? Job xxxiv. 29, 'If he hides his face, who can behold him?' None can shew his face, as the opposition in the next words shews. False daubers may come to you, and say 'Peace, peace,' as they in the prophet said; but listen what God will speak, he only must and can do it; and be sure you make sure of him before you come to die. Would any wise prince defer the treaty of peace with his enemy till he come into the field, and when the battle is begun? How foolish then are those who neglect seeking after God till the assault of death comes, and the king of fears, with all his terrors, hath encompassed them round!

4. The fourth observation is: That let God's people be in never so great distress, yet it is an easy thing for God to give peace to them. Mark the expression here used: it is but 'speaking' peace; that is, it is as easy for him to give peace as it is for you to speak a word; it is no more to him. Then our comfort is, that as he only must do it, so he easily can do it, even with a word.

Reason 1.—Because his speaking is creating; if he speaks, he makes things to be, even with a word. As at first he did but say, 'Let there be light, and there was light;' so still, if he but say, 'Let there be peace,' there is peace; he made all, and upholds all by the word of his power. As therefore, when the storm was at its height, and the waves most raging, yet at one word of Christ's they were all still,—'The sea and the winds obey him,'—so when temptations are most fierce, and the doubts of thine own mind most tumultuous and raging, a word from him can still them.

Reason 2.—Secondly, because the light which God gives to a man's spirit

when he speaks peace is a sure and infallible light, and therefore a satisfying light, so as when it comes it must needs give peace, and no objection, no temptation can darken or obscure it when it shines. 'If he give quietness, who can trouble?' says he, in Job xxxiv. 29. No creature is able to separate from his love, or the assurance of it.

(1.) It is a certain and infallible light which God gives when he speaks peace. 'The anointing from above, which enlighteneth a man's eyes, is truth, and is no lie,' 1 John ii. 27; that is, in teaching a man,—of which he there speaks, not only what he is in himself, but what he is in teaching us,—he doth it so as a man is not deluded by it, and therefore it is added, 'None else need teach him:' for did the Spirit, when he did speak peace, speak so as that that man to whom it is spoken did not infallibly apprehend it, he should speak in vain; for so the Apostle reasons in case of unknown tongues, that if a trumpet give an uncertain sound, or a man speak so as it shall not be known what he speaks, 'he beats the air,' 1 Cor. xiv. 9. Now therefore, surely God, when he speaks peace, speaks it so infallibly and distinctly that the soul knows the meaning of it; it is not a voice else, for, says the Apostle there, ver. 10, 'The end of all voices is to signify;' and therefore, 'If I know not the meaning of the voice, he shall be as a barbarian that speaks to me,' ver. 11, especially when the speaker undertakes to be a witness, as the Holy Ghost, in speaking peace, is, 1 John v. 6. Now to witness is such a testimony as is taken for infallible, for the end of it is to put an end to the controversy, and it ends the strife between man and man; now the Holy Ghost, when he speaks, speaks as a witness, and therefore puts an end to a man's doubts: he speaks infallibly.

(2.) And therefore, in the second place, it is a satisfying light also; it is such a light as dispels darkness, as answers all objections, and so speaks peace home. As in a question and controversy in divinity or logic, when some one bottom truth is understood, a man hath a light which goes through all the objections, and answers them all; such a light doth the Spirit give to a poor distressed soul, about the great controversy of his own salvation, when he doth speak peace: he gives such a light as satisfies the mind, as lets him see *that* in God's free grace, and in Christ, which doth answer to all he or all the devils can say against him, from what wants or objections are in himself. He openeth, and no man nor devil is able to shut. And therefore, when he doth speak peace, his testimony is taken and believed: 'If we receive the witness of men, and rest in it,' 1 John v. 9, 'the witness of God is greater;' that is, of more power and efficacy to persuade and satisfy the soul.

Use 1.—The first use is a use of comfort to poor souls that are in distress, and in such distress sometimes, as they think and say their case is desperate and past recovery; so far are their souls sometimes shot into despair. Consider how easy it is for you to have your condition altered and changed, even in a moment. I tell thee, though, it may be, thou hast been cast down this twenty years, and thy soul is battered, broken, hardened, settled, fixed in serious thoughts of thy ruin and reprobation, yet one good look, one good word from God, shall in an instant dispel all, alter thy conceit and apprehension clean. God can and doth often more with one word, in one moment, than Satan could do in many years, with all the objections he could muster up. The truth of this, in experience, we often find and observe in ourselves and others. Yea, and sometimes when he doth speak peace, he gives such satisfaction to a man's soul in that particular, that he would be content to be as many years more in his spiritual conflicts to enjoy but the like light

one half hour. Thus easy is it for God to speak peace. Though thou thinkest thyself never so far off from peace, yet he can speak peace to them that are afar off, as well as those who are near; as himself says, Isa. lvii. 19, for, says he, it is I that speak it. And when he doth it, then all thy doubts and distresses will be forgotten, as the pains of a woman in travail are when a man-child is born.

Use 2.—Secondly, is the church in any distress? (as the church here at this time was,) he can redeem it out of all with a word. A word spoken to Cyrus's heart did set them in their own land again; so you have it expressed, Isa. xliv. 26–28, 'The God that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built.' You see his manner of doing it, it is but with a word speaking; 'he says to Jerusalem, Be built.' And though there be never so great impediments in the way, he will say to the deep, Be dry, that his people may pass over; he dried up a whole nation, a sea of people, namely, the Babylonians, to make way for this deliverance. And when they are conquered, and Cyrus, a new king, comes to have the sway of things, God speaks to his heart also: 'That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and causeth him to say to Jerusalem, Be thou built.' Therefore go to him, and trust in him in all the distresses of the church, as the church also did, Ps. xliv. 4, 'Thou art my King, command deliverances;' a mandamus from God doth it, and will do it at any time.

5. Let God be never so angry, and his people's distress never so great, yet he will speak peace in the end to his people. You heard before, that if we have peace, he only must give it; and then, that he could and was able with ease to do it: and now you shall hear that he will certainly do it in the end.

The reasons the text suggests are these:—

Reason 1.—If we consider but who this God is that is to speak peace, 'I will hear what God the Lord will speak;' he is the Lord, and therefore able to speak what pleaseth him; he is peculiarly 'the God of peace,' and therefore willing to speak peace. Now, (1.) when it is said he is the 'God of peace, and the God of comfort,' the meaning is, he is full of it, infinitely full of it, and 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.' Thoughts of peace and love to his do boil within him, as hatred or malice doth in a malicious man towards his enemy, so as he cannot contain and forbear expressing it towards him: that as David says his 'thoughts did burn within him,' and at last break forth; so in God, 'I know the thoughts I think towards you,' says he to them of the captivity, Jer. xxix. 11, 'they are thoughts of peace, and not of evil.' And, (2.) besides that these his thoughts of peace are taken up of himself, his Son also hath bespoken peace for us; and therefore God will speak it: even as Joseph, though he spake roughly a while to his brethren, yet could not in the end contain, Gen. xiv. 1; so nor God.

Reason 2.—Secondly, let us consider who they are to whom he is to speak it. They are his people, as the text hath it; and to them there is no question but he will speak peace, though he seems angry for a while. They are his people, that is the reason given, 1 Sam. xii. 22, 'He will not cast off his people;' as also Isa. lxiii. 8, 10, 'When they rebelled, he was wroth; yet he said, Surely they are my people: so I was their Saviour.' *They?* why they are the 'sons of peace,' Luke x. 6, ordained for peace, and therefore shall be sure to have it; and although some differences may arise betwixt God and them, yet there is a natural στοργή in the Lord, that moves him to speak peace in the end to them. As the dumb son of Crœsus, when he saw his

father like to be killed, though he had never spake before, yet then, out of an impetus of spirit, the strings of his tongue were unloosed, and he cried out to the murderer, 'Kill not King Crœsus;' so, when the enemies of his church are ready to devour his people, and Satan is ready to swallow his child up in despair, then God's bowels work within him, and he can hold no longer, but cries, 'Save my child, save my church.' 'Is Ephraim my pleasant child?' says God, Jer. xxxi. 20. Well, says God, 'though I spake against him,' and took him up, and chid him soundly, yet I cannot forget my child, says he, nor my fatherly affection to him, but 'my bowels are stirred, and I will surely have mercy on him.'

Reason 3.—Thirdly, otherwise if God did not in the end speak peace, they would indeed return to folly, which is the third thing in the text. For his end of speaking peace is, that they might not return to folly: Ps. cxxv. 3, 'The rod of the wicked shall not always lie upon the righteous, lest they put forth their hand to iniquity;' therefore, at the last verse, 'peace shall be upon Israel.' As for this cause he speaks outward peace, so also inward, and suffers not the rod of Satan, and of his own heavy displeasure, to lie upon their hearts, for else they would return to the pleasures of sin; for every creature must have some delight: their spirits would fail, and be tired out else, and wearied in good duties, if God should not in the end speak peace, Isa. lvii., 'The spirit would fail before me.' When the child swounds in the whipping, God lets fall the rod, and falls a-kissing it, to fetch life into it again. As it is a rule in physic still to maintain nature, and therefore when that shall be in hazard to be destroyed, they leave giving purging physic, and give cordials; so doth God with his people: though with purging physic he often brings their spirits very weak and low, yet he will uphold and maintain their spirits, so as they shall not fail and be extinguished, but then he will give cordials to raise them up again.

Use 3.—What good heart that bears a childlike affection to God would offend such a God, that be thy distresses what they will be, will certainly speak peace? Then do not put him to it, spend not upon that precious stock of his free grace and love. It is true 'he is married to thee,' and therefore 'though thou hast gone a-whoring after many lovers,' Jer. iii. 1, 2, 14, still he says, 'Return, for I am married to thee.' As, therefore, when man and wife are fallen out, they consider, We must live together, and therefore they reconcile themselves again; so consider it must be between God and thee, and make it a means and motive to recover thee, as Samuel did to the Israelites, 1 Sam. xii. 22, 'You have committed this great sin; yet turn not aside from following the Lord, for God will not cast you off, you are his people.' Go home to him again, he will speak peace. Think thus, The time will come wherein God will be friends again with me, he and I cannot be strange long; though I would, he will not; Isa. lvii. 18, 19, though he went on stubbornly, yet God healed him, and would not lose his child, therefore I will return of myself.

THE FOLLY OF RELAPSING

AFTER PEACE SPOKEN.

But let them turn no more to folly.—PSALM LXXXV. 8.

6. THE sixth observation is, That peace being spoken to their hearts by God, they should 'return no more to folly.' See this, Ezra ix. 13, 14, 'Thou having punished us less than we deserve, and given us such a deliverance as this, should we again break thy commandments, wouldest thou not be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us?'

Reason 1.—Because it will be a greater aggravation in sinning. It is made the aggravation of Solomon's sin, 1 Kings xi. 9, 'that God had appeared to him twice.' They were especial appearances and manifestations of mercy; and though such do now cease, yet we read of such as are analogical to them: as, John xiv. 21, Christ promiseth to manifest himself, which is by shedding abroad his love and his Father's love into the heart, which is evident by the former words, 'he shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him,' and after he saith, 'We will come to him, and make our abode with him,' ver. 23, and ver. 27, 'My peace I will give unto you.' Now such appearances will be set upon the score of every sin many years after, as they were upon Solomon's. And the reason is, because nothing wounds an ingenuous, loving nature more than matter of unkindness: 'If it had been my enemy,' says David, 'I could have borne it,' Ps. lv. 12, 14; 'but it was thou, O man, mine acquaintance; we took sweet counsel together:' a bosom friend, to whom I had committed my secrets, opened my heart. Thus, when God hath unbosomed himself, as it were, to a man, and told him what was in his heart towards him, this goes nigh him if he lifts up the heel against him. And the reason of that further also is—(1.) Because of all things else, a man cannot endure to have his love abused; you come nigh him when you do so, for his love is himself, and commands all in him; so that abuse his love, and you strike at his heart. It is less to abuse any excellency in a man, to reproach and extenuate his parts, learning, &c., though these are dear to him; but his love is his bowels. And therefore, when God hath opened his heart to a man, and set his love upon him, and revealed it to him, and he carries himself unworthily, it pains him at the heart. Besides, (2.) it is against the law of nature and of nations to seek out for a peace, and get it concluded, and then secretly to prepare for and enter into a war: nothing more hateful, or can exasperate two

nations one against another more than this. It was the aggravation of Absalom's sin that, being newly reconciled with his father, and taken into favour again, after two years' discountenance, he then began to rebel more closely.

Reason 2.—The second reason is intimated in the word 'folly:' as if the Lord should have said, Set aside the unkindness and wrong you do to me, yet therein you befool yourselves; you will have the worst of it. And indeed, when God doth afterwards draw nigh to a man again, upon that his recovery of his peace, it appears to be folly, even in that man's own apprehension. When he hath tasted how sweet God is, then come and ask him, What, will ye return to sin again? he will then say, Ask me if I will wound or cut my flesh. It is impossible, thinks he, I should any more be so besotted; if there were no other motives, he thinks it the greatest folly in the world. And therefore God on purpose chooseth out that expression, and placeth it here in this case, because it is indeed the greatest folly in God's sight, and is so apprehended by ourselves, looking upon sin after peace is spoken to us. It is folly to sin against God at any time, but especially then, and that will appear by these particulars:—

(1.) Because, before a man had that peace he felt the bitterness of sin, for God never speaks peace till that be felt. Now, that is an argument even to sense never to return to it again, which a fool will be warned by: a burnt child dreads the fire; even a child will take heed, being taught by sense. When a man shall be in great distress, and his conscience shall suggest to him, as Jer. iv. 18, 'Thy ways and thy doings have procured these things to thee: this is thy wickedness,'—a speech like that when you say to your children, when they have gotten any harm, or cold, or sickness, This is your playing, and gadding, and going in the snow, and your eating of fruit, &c.,—so doth God speak there to them when they were in distress, 'This is your wickedness, for it is bitter, it reacheth to the heart;' it woundeth the conscience, the wounding of which, of all else, is the greatest misery. When once a man after this hath peace restored to him, and he comes newly out of such a distress, ask him then how he likes turning to such a sin again, and he will tell you it is the greatest folly in the world: ask David if he will murder any more after his bones have been broken and set again.

(2.) Thou wilt easily acknowledge it is folly to return to sin again if thou considerest the terms upon which thou didst obtain thy peace. Reckon what pains it cost thee to wash out the guilt and stain which sin had made, what vows and resolutions thou madest, what bonds thou didst seal unto, what promises never to return, what prayers and tears, what raps and knocks at heaven's gates ere thou couldest get an answer, or God to speak one word, he making as if he had not been within: why, is it not folly now to lose that in an instant thou hast been a-getting so long, haply many years, and with so much pains and cost? You use it as an excuse to prodigals to say things lightly come by are lightly gone; and yet you count them and call them fools for it, as not knowing what it is to earn a penny: how much more folly is it when a man having before mortgaged his peace, and God restored it again after much suit, and waiting many a term, then to come home and venture to cast all away at one throw at dice? Such a fool art thou when thou returnest to sin. To drink that at one draught which thou hast been getting many a year, what madness is it! When thou hast taken much pains to wash thyself, then to wallow in the mire again, and make thyself new work, what folly is it! Who but children and fools will do thus? That

which the church said in another case may well be alluded to in this: Cant. v. 3, 'I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

(3.) Consider what it is thou dost hazard to lose by returning to folly—thy peace, (David lost it, as appears Ps. li. 12; therefore, says he, 'Restore to me the joy of thy salvation;') in losing of which thou wilt be so much a loser, that if the sin thou choosest were able to give thee all the world, it could not recompense thee; no, not the loss of one hour's communion with God, which in a moment will bring thee in more sweetness than all thy sins can do to eternity. If all the pleasures of sin were contracted, and the quintessence of them strained into one cup, they would not afford so much as one drop of true peace with God doth, being let fall into the heart. It is 'peace which passeth understanding.' Few pleasures here do exceed the senses; nay, the senses are capable of more than the things can give; but this passeth understanding. 'God's loving-kindness is better than life.' If it were propounded to thee, thou must lose thy life next moment if thou shouldest commit such a sin, wouldest thou venture, if thou didst believe it? Now 'the loving-kindness of God is better than life,' and wilt thou lose the enjoying of it, though but for a moment?

(4.) It is folly to return again, because the pleasures of sin will be much less to thee after thou hast had peace spoken. Take them at the best, when they are freshest, and when thy palate was most in relish and taste with them, when thou wert carnal, and ere thou knewest what sweetness was in God, and they then were but poor sorry pleasures. But now they will prove far more empty than before: they are empty vain pleasures even to him that hath them in their flower, and in his season of sinning; and therefore all wicked men are weary, and do inwardly complain of their condition, only they cannot find sweetness in God, and so are fain to keep themselves to their husks; but, alas! to thee they are far less worth than to another man, who knows not God, and therefore thou art like to have a worse bargain of it. Another man can make more money of a sin, and get more pleasure out of it, than thou art able to do.

For, *first*, thy conscience having been scorched with sin,—as scalded flesh adheres more, and is more sensible in coming to the fire, than other parts of the body,—is become of a quicker sense; whereas wicked men's is seared, and so they commit 'all uncleanness with greediness;' but thine is tender and galled in the act, which allays much of the pleasure of thy sin, and mingleth the more bitterness with it.

And, *secondly*, besides this galling of conscience, which is common to thee with many an unregenerate man, thou hast a principle of grace, an inner man, which is dead to such pleasures, that tastes them not, that is like Barzillai, who, through age, 2 Sam. xix. 35, could not taste either what he ate or drank, as young men do; no more can that new man in thee, and therefore it can be but half as pleasant to thee as to another man. If one side of a man be taken all with a numb palsy, what pleasure is it to that man to exercise his limbs in the actions of life? He is but half a man, and lives but half a life. So it is with thee when thou hast grace in thy heart: but half thy heart can take pleasure in sinning; that new man, the other half, reluctates, grieves for it, hates what thou doest; and all this must needs strike off much of the pleasure.

But, *thirdly*, if we add to this, that this new man in him, having once tasted what sweetness is in God, and how good the Lord is, is then like a man that hath eaten sweetmeats, other things are out of taste with him, and therefore

also it is folly to return. 'No man,' says Christ, Luke v. 39, 'having drunk old wine desireth new, for he saith the old is better;' a man used to high fare cannot agree so well with thin diet: so the soul having been used to taste of great pleasures in God, the impression and remembrance of them leaves his soul less satisfied than another man's. A stomach that hath been enlarged to full diet, looks for it, and riseth more hungry from a slender meal; now communion with God enlarges the faculties, and widens them, and makes them more capable of greater joys than other men have, and therefore the creature is less able to fill them; still he remembers with much grief, whilst he is eating his husks, what fare he had in his father's house; and oh, 'then it was better with me than now.' Call me not Naomi, but call me Marah, as she said, 'for I went out full, and am come home empty;' so doth he say when he comes from the act of sinning, he went with his heart full of peace, and meeting with a bargain of sinning, thought to eke out his joy, and make it fuller, but he comes home empty.

Use 1.—The first use is to those who have had peace spoken to them: Let them at such times fear themselves and God most, for then comes in this, as you see here, as the most seasonable admonition that can be given, to return no more to folly.

(1.) Fear God then most; for of all times else then sins provoke him most. To come and call him father, and the guide of your youth, and yet to fall to sin, this is to do as evil as you can, you cannot do worse, Jer. iii. 4, 5. So Ezra ix. 13, 14, 'After such an escaping should we again break thy commandments, wouldest thou not be angry till thou hadst consumed us?' In times of affliction it is the property of a good child to love God most: in times of speaking peace, to fear God most and his goodness, and to fear to offend him for his goodness' sake. Did I only say that God is provoked most then, if you return to folly? Nay, I add further, he is grieved, which is more than to be provoked; and therefore you shall mark that expression and admonition not to 'grieve God's Spirit,' then comes in when the 'Spirit hath sealed us up to the day of redemption,' Eph. iv. 30. Then by sinning we are said more properly to grieve him than before, when he hath so far engaged himself to love a man, and expressed himself to him, and set his seal upon him for his. God is angry with wicked men's sins, but he is grieved for yours. To grieve him is more than to anger him. Mere anger is an affection can ease itself by revenge, and by coming even again with the party; and when we can or intend to do so, our minds are not so much aggrieved, but please themselves rather to think of the revenge which we mean to execute: so when wicked men sin whom God means to meet with, he is said to be angry rather than grieved; and says, 'I will ease myself of mine adversaries,' Isa. i. 24, 'and avenge myself of mine enemies.' But here, as when a man's wife that lies in his bosom, or his child, shall wrong him; so is it when one sins whom God hath set himself to love, and done much for, and made known his everlasting kindness unto, and sealed to the day of redemption. This goes to his heart, grieves him rather than angers him; and such are the truest and deepest griefs. What should he do with you in this case? If afflict you, and by that means go about to turn you from your iniquity, therein he shall but afflict himself as it were; for 'though they rebelled, yet when they were afflicted he was afflicted,' Isa. lxiii. 9, 10. As when a father that is a magistrate, or as one that maintains a student in a college, if either punisheth a child or pupil in his purse, he punisheth himself; so must God afflict himself to afflict you. Put not the Lord into these straits if you have any love in you. And—

(2.) As thou art therefore to fear God most then, so thyself most, and to be more watchful over thy own heart; thou art then apt to return to folly, if thou takest not heed; as when a man hath been very hot, or sweat much, he is apt to take the greatest cold. Hezekiah, after God sealed peace to him and answered his prayers, and renewed the lease of his life, his heart got cold, he did return to folly. The reason is, because then the heart is apt to grow less watchful, and to think itself fortified enough against any tentation. As St Peter, having seen Christ transfigured in the mount, grew confident in his own strength. And know that the devil watcheth such an opportunity most, for he gets a great victory if he can foil thee then, after he hath been foiled himself, and when thou art most triumphing over him. How many battles have been lost through security of victory and recoiling of the enemy! And besides, our corrupt nature, so far as unrenewed, is apt to gather heart to itself, to slight sin, as thinking its pardon easily gotten.

Therefore when thou art tempted, labour often to renew those thoughts which thou hadst of thy sin at that time when thou wert suing for peace, before thy peace was gotten; when thou wouldest have given a world for God's favour; and also what thoughts thou hadst of it when God spake peace, how thou didst abhor it, yea, thyself. And look what sin was most bitter to thee and an enemy to thy peace,—as if uncleanness, idleness, neglect of prayer, ill company, &c.,—and preserve in thy heart those bitter apprehensions of it, and say of it, Thou hast 'been a bloody sin to me,' (as Moses's wife said of her husband:) and though I have got peace and my life saved, yet it was a bloody sin to Christ, his blood was shed to purchase this my peace; and shall I return to it?

And when tempted to it again, have recourse to the kindness God shewed thee in pardoning, and say, 'How shall I do this, and sin against God?' say as he said, 'Is this thy kindness to thy friend?' 2 Sam. xvi. 17; and what! shall I, Absalom-like, now I am new reconciled to my Father, fall a-plotting treason again? What! shall I make more work for prayer, more work for God, break my bones again, and lie roaring again? Think thus, I was burned in the hand before, I shall be racked surely now. 'Sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee.'

Use 2.—The doctrine of assurance, if not abused, and of God speaking peace to men, is no dangerous doctrine to make men secure and presumptuous in sinning. When peace is preached in any man's heart, this use naturally flows from that doctrine, 'Return no more to folly.' The very scope of the whole epistle of St John is to help all believers to assurance, as appears by 1 John i. 4, v. 13, 'These things I write you, that ye might have communion with God, and that your joy might be full.' But this will open a way to all licentiousness. No, says St John, chap. ii. 1, 'These things I write unto you, that ye sin not.' Nothing guards the heart more against tentations than the peace of God: it is said to guard the heart, Phil. iv. 7. Yea, and if you do sin, the assurance of God's love is the speediest way to recover you; so it follows, 'If any one doth sin, we have an advocate with the Father,' &c. 'And he that hath this hope in him,'—that is, to live with Christ,—and 'knows what manner of love the Father bears us,' 'purifies himself as he is pure,' 1 John iii. 1–3.

If there were no more but self-love in a man, it were then no wonder if he doth abuse it. For self-love, where the love of God is wanting, is unthankful and ungrateful, willing to take all the love and kindness which is afforded, and abuse it, and work upon it for its own advantage. And it is true also that because we have too much of this principle unmortified in us, therefore

God trusteth so few with much assurance, because they would abuse it. But where true love to God is seated, and much of it implanted, there the love of God and the peace of God doth as kindly and naturally enkindle and inflame and set it a-work, even as arguments suitable to self-love do work upon and stir that principle. For grace is more for God than for ourselves, it being the image of God's holiness, whose holiness consists in this, to aim at himself in all; and therefore when God's free grace towards a man is revealed, it raiseth him up to higher strains of love to God and hatred of sin. And therefore it is observable, Ps. li. 12, that David, when he prays for 'the restoring of the joy of his salvation,' he prays not simply for it, or alone. but withal prays for a free spirit, 'Establish me with thy free spirit;' that is, a spirit of ingenuity, which is kindly, sweetly, and freely wrought upon, Therefore when we have a free spirit wrought in us, then that free love that is in God towards us will work most kindly upon it, and constrain us to love him that loved us first. 'The love of Christ constrains us,' 2 Cor. v. 14, 'because we thus judge, that if Christ died for all, then they which live should not live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them.' St Paul gives the reason why this love of Christ did thus constrain him, because he did thus judge; that is, this consideration of Christ's love, he having a principle of love in his heart to Christ, he found to be a powerful prevailing reason to persuade him to live to Christ. Having a new judgment, he saw force and strength in the argument. And so shall we if we thus judge; and it will have this natural consequence as naturally to follow upon it in our hearts, as any reason in any other kind hath, that is brought to enforce any other conclusion. And therefore as the mind is constrained, as it were, to assent to a truth proved by force of reason, that if you grant this, then this or that will follow; so because we judge this reasonable by an argument drawn out of love's topics, that if Christ died for all, who otherwise must themselves have died, that then they should live to him; this will constrain us to love him, and live to him. *Amor Dei est extaticus, nec se sinit esse sui juris.*

This text and admonition here gives a just occasion to consider a little of that so often questioned case of conscience concerning relapses of God's children into the same sins and folly again, and whether, after peace spoken, God's people may return again to folly. Some have held that a man after a second repentance could not fall into the same sin again; others, if he did, it excluded him from mercy for time to come. For the comfort of some poor souls, whose case and tentation this may be, I will speak somewhat, though sparingly and with caution.

1. The Scripture nowhere excludeth those from the state of grace, or bars mercy from those that have relapsed into the same sin, especially so long as in regard of the manner of their sinning it be but folly, not wickedness or wilful sinning; that is, rather proceeding out of error of understanding, and heat and impetuousness of foolish affections, than obstinacy and malice in the will, and with 'despite of the Spirit of grace,' Heb. x. 29. Yea—

2. In Scripture we meet with such passages and promises as may undoubtedly uphold any soul that hath so fallen, after peace received, into the same sin, and preserve him from apprehending himself excluded therefore from mercy and the state of grace. As, Hosea xiv. 4, 'I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely.' Unless they had fallen after repenting and former healing, it could not have been called backsliding; and yet

this he promises to heal, and withal shews the ground that moves him to it, his loving them freely. For if in anything his free love is shewn to any of his children, and drawn out, it is in healing again such a backsliding soul after recovery and peace given; for the falling into the same sin which hath been repented of and healed, provokes God more than a thousand other acts of sins formerly committed, though of the same kind. And therein also to shew his free love, that he can pardon even the abuse of love itself, he leaves some thus to sin after his love shed abroad in their hearts. Some he shews his free love unto, in keeping them from sinning; others, in pardoning them, and giving them repentance. They are but several ways of drawing it forth; so that, if in anything, herein his free love is shewn, for if it were not free it would never endure itself to be abused.

And likewise the sure mercies of David are then shewn, when God 'multiplies to pardon;' so, Isa. lv. 3, having mentioned the promise of the 'sure mercies of David,' he promises to 'multiply to pardon,' as it is in the original, ver. 7; which are thus joined, both because the sureness of his covenant is therein shewn, and because we might haply multiply to sin; and at least it supposeth the possibility of it again. God likewise runs upon such a supposition in that expression of his to his own people, Jer. iii. 1, 2, 'They say, If a man put away his wife, and she become another man's, shall not the land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord.' He speaks to her as to one who had been his wife, who though she had not been put away by him, but had put away herself, and run away, not once, but often, and that with many lovers; and sometimes in the midst of her whoredoms, had come in and made challenge of his former love, and pleaded his former mercy to her, and yet fallen back again, ver. 4, 5, (where he adds, 'Wilt thou not from this time cry, My father, and thou art the guide of my youth?' that is, I know, says God, you will come now and cry, as heretofore you have done, and say, Oh, thou art my father and my husband, and confidently still claim an interest in me upon my former kindness, and yet do as evil as you can, for you cannot do worse than thus to abuse my love,) yet, for all this, at the 12th verse, 'Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; for I am married to you,' ver 14. That which he doth thus to a nation, he may do to a particular man who is his child. Again—

3. There are not altogether examples wanting for this:—

Examp. 1.—We find Samson, a godly man, (whom yet we would scarce have thought such, but that we find his name in the list of those worthies, Heb. xi.,) ensnared with a Philistine woman, against the counsel of his parents, Judg. xiv. 3, who clearly laid open his sin to him. And he was in the event reproved for his folly, for his wife deceived him, told his riddle to his enemies; which he in the end perceived. And further to reprove him, in the issue she was given away to another, ver. 16, 17, 20. From all which passages of reproof, a holy man, that had his eyes in his head, could not but see his error. And yet again, a long while after this, (twenty years after, Judg. xv. 20,) when certainly ere that he had repented of this his sin, for which his parents before, and after God, so clearly did rebuke him, he went to Gaza, Judg. xvi. 1, 'and saw a harlot, and went in to her,' and there escaped narrowly with his life at midnight; and, ver. 4, after that also it came to pass he fell in love with another, as bad as any of the former, Delilah, who was his ruin. But his returning thus to folly cost him dear, for in the end he was taken as a captive to the Philistines, his enemies, and that through her falsehood; deprived of his strength he had spent upon these women; had his

eyes, those betraying lights, put out, that had ensnared him; and himself made a fool of, to make his enemies sport. So as no child of God can take any great encouragement thus to return to folly for the future by his example; though comfort they may have therefrom in case they have returned for the time past.

Examp. 2.—Another example may be that of Jehoshaphat, who committed a great sin in joining with Ahab, that wicked king that 'sold himself to work wickedness,' 2 Chron. xviii. 1–3; and he was foretold what would be the success of that confederacy and journey by Micaiah, before he went with him to battle, and after in the battle itself, where he hardly escaped with his life, and by an extraordinary providence at his prayer was delivered, ver. 31, 32; and as if that were not sufficient, God sends another prophet to him, chap. xix. 2, who with open mouth reproves him, and discovers to him his sin, 'Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord:' which message to so good a man doubtless was not in vain, but humbled him for that his sin, and wrought repentance in him to avert that wrath. And yet after that great and miraculous deliverance of him and his people, chap. xx., we find him relapsing into the same sin, ver. 35, 'After this did Jehoshaphat join himself with Ahaziah, king of Israel, who did very wickedly. And he joined himself with him to make ships to go to Tarshish;' which another prophet in like manner reproveth, and likewise God himself rebuked by the like ill success of that league to the former: 'the ships were broken,' ver. 37.

Examp. 3.—St Peter, a man who seemed by other of his carriages bold enough, was yet three several times surprised with base fear: once when he tempted Christ not to hazard himself at Jerusalem, where Christ told him that he was to suffer, Matt. xvi. 21–23, 'Master,' says he, 'spare thyself;' upon which speech Christ calls him Satan, rebuketh him more sharply than at any other time, for which surely there was a more than ordinary cause. St Peter thought that if his Master should suffer at Jerusalem, that himself and the rest should not be safe. That speech, therefore, proceeded from fear; and therefore Christ doth immediately thereupon call for self-denial and taking up the cross, ver. 24. And this was immediately after peace spoken, ver. 16–18. Christ had never more comfortably given testimony to St Peter and his faith than there. Yet again, after this, Christ had him up into the mount, and transfigured himself, to hearten him against that trial to come, which made him so confident; yet then he denied him at his arraignment: when again Christ, immediately upon that, looked back upon him with so sweet a look as broke his heart for this his folly; and so he returned again, and it cost him many a tear. And Christ, after the resurrection, owned him again more than any of the rest; bade them that first met him, 'Go tell Peter.' He mentions him by name, and in especial: Go tell him the first news of it. And then also he asked him, 'Peter, lovest thou me?' and he said, 'Lord, thou knowest I love thee:' as if he had said, Though I have played the wretch, yet I love thee. Upon this, though he grew more bold, Acts iv. 13, yet, Gal. ii. 11, 12, we find him falling into the grudgings of the same disease, which cast him into another fit: 'he dissembled, fearing them of the circumcision.' This was a spice of the former sin, though not so gross; and though the outward acts in these sins were diverse in their occasions, yet they were all acts and buds of the same root of bitterness; and may as well be called sins of the same kind as the committing differing acts of uncleanness are reckoned falling into the same sin.

4. *In* the fourth place, if the Scriptures had been utterly silent in examples,

yet reason, consonant to other principles, and grounds of divinity, and of the Scriptures, might persuade the same.

Reason 1.—If he may, after the most serious and thorough repentance, fall again into as grievous a sin of another kind, and return; why not into the same again? I confess there is some disparity, which might make him more averse, and set him in some more remoteness from the same sin he hath particularly repented of than another; which shall be considered in its place. Yet the difference cannot be supposed such as should make the one possible, and not the other; all true repentance working the heart to an abominating every sin, as well as any: and therefore, if it were true, it was for that particular sin, as sin; and then it would work the like against all and every sin, according to the measure of the sinfulness. And though it may and doth work a more keen and special hatred against that particular sin a man hath been most stung with, yet still this is but so far as this aggravation (to fall into the same sin again) may cause such a relapse to be more sinful than another sin. And so far, and upon that ground, he is and may be more set and strengthened against it than against another sin. But then, if the supposition fall upon another gross sin, never before committed, the sole and single act of which other circumstances make as heinous even as this reiterated act of a sin formerly committed can be, then the one is equally as possible as the other. But, however, yet still the difference is but in degrees,—namely, in that the heart is elongated a degree or so further from that sin formerly committed than any other,—which will not therefore so vary the case (as *magis* and *minus* do not) that it should be made impossible to fall into the one, and not into the other.

Reason 2.—If he may fall into some gross sin, which at first conversion he did above all other humble himself for, and yet that same initial repentance did not put him into such an impossibility of falling into that sin again; why then should a renewed act of repentance for the same, or for some other reiterated sin, be supposed to have such virtue in it as to make him shot-free for ever from the same fiery dart again?

Reason 3.—Again, thirdly, let it be considered from whence it should be that a renewed, or indeed any act of true repentance, though never so great and intense, should have such a transcendent, eternal, and invincible virtue in it, and privilege annexed to it; for how is it that repentance doth strengthen us against sin, but by restoring the decayed frame of grace to a better constitution and greater degree of strength than before, and by raising it above a man's lusts, and above that lust more than all other? As in David, when he prayed, 'Create in me a clean heart,' which, through his sin of uncleanness, was in an especial manner defiled with a proneness to that sin. But yet withal remember, that that new frame of heart and strength gotten by that renewed repentance, and that augmentation and increase of hatred against, and abominating that sin wrought by it, is all but a creature,—as grace and every new degree of grace is,—and therefore, for preserving us, hath in itself but the power and force of a created habit, which may be prevailed against by the sin that is in us; and can no more, nay, much less, put us into a state of confirmation against any particular sin, than the grace of the angels could of itself confirm them in a state against all sin.

And as for the impression of that bitterness which, in our repentance for that sin fallen into, was made upon our hearts, that also can be supposed to have but the like force upon our spirits that the impression of joy unspeakable and glorious hath upon the heart in those heavenly raptures which believers sometimes enjoy. Yea, and the latter of these will easily be sup-

posed to be of the greater efficacy of the two, and both but creatures. Now those ravishing joys are not yet such immortal and everlastingly quickening cordials, that put such spirits into a man as to preserve him from swounds and faintings of spirit for ever; and though, whilst they abide and are present to the heart, they do then raise it above all things here below, yet when a man hath been a while off from that mount, and hath conversed a while with things here again below, then that lustre wears away, as the glory that shined in Moses's face did, and after a while the sense and present taste of those joys wears out; and when that is gone, the bare remembrance of them which is left hath not, in their absence, such an infallible, though a great efficacy to preserve his mind in an everlasting disrelishing former delights, but that he may and often doth fall in love again too much with them; although indeed whilst the present sense of them did abide upon the heart, it abstracted the mind from all things here below. And hence a man is apt to 'fall from his first love,' Rev. ii., and from that high esteem of spiritual things; as the Galatians, chap. iv. 15, 'Where is the blessedness you spake of?' says St Paul to them. Therefore answerably the remembrance of the bitterness of any sin felt in our deepest humiliations is much less able to preserve a man, nor is the impression and dint made so lasting, nor the scars and wounds of conscience continuing for ever so fresh, as everlastingly to preserve and deter us from falling into the same sin again. For both are but creatures, and at best but arguments drawn from sense and experience within ourselves, and have but a human created power which is not always efficacious; especially seeing God hath ordained us to 'live by faith more than by sense,' for faith is appointed by God to be our more constant keeper, 1 Peter i. 5, 'We are kept through faith unto salvation,' and by it more surely and more constantly than by impressions of joy or sorrow which are made to sense: and yet we are not kept by it of itself, but by the power of God. So then we are kept by the power of God as the principal supporter and guardian, through faith as the instrumental, and by it rather than by sense or any other grace of sorrow or repentance, because faith carries the heart out of itself, and commits itself wholly into the hands of God as a faithful Creator, (who is the strength of Israel, to keep a man from every evil work,) as not being able to secure itself against any sin through the power of any fortification or strength that any other grace or degree of grace hath built, no, not for one moment; and therefore is as dependent upon God after a fall, and a renewed repentance out of it, yea, and more than before he fell; and his own woeful experience hath reason to make him so.

The like instance to illustrate the truth of this we may draw from the assurance of faith itself. For even the assurance of faith itself,—which is an act properly belonging to that grace, called therefore the assurance of faith, Heb. x. 22,—which doth strengthen us as much against doubting, when it is joined with joy unspeakable and glorious, as repentance can do against any other sin; and whilst it is upon us, in the strength of it a believer is apt to think himself armed and strengthened, and so established as that he shall never question God's love any more, or the pardon of his sins; and yet, experience shews it, that the guilt of sin prevails sometimes again after this, and the same doubts arise and prevail as much as ever. Neither will the remembrance of the former assurance be always of force enough to resist them; for he may come to question that assurance itself also, and so forget that he was purged from his old sins. And if the guilt of sin prevail in the conscience again, against such a renewed and settled act of faith, why may not

the power of a lust prevail in the members after a renewed act of repentance?

Reason 4.—If it be said that a renewed act of thorough repentance doth keep a man, not by any peculiar virtue in itself alone, but by the power of God concurrent with it; then I demand to see the promise wherein God hath infallibly obliged and engaged his power, upon such a renewed act of repentance, to preserve from falling into that sin of all other for ever, without which no man in faith can affirm it, and without which there is an *it may be*, and a supposition of such a possibility as sometime falleth out and is reduced to existence. God indeed hath said, that if we fall he will put under his hand to break that fall, that it shall not ruin us; but not so to keep us in his hands as we shall be out of danger of falling again. A renewed act of repentance is indeed an ordinance sanctified to preserve a man; yet but in the same manner that other ordinances are, as prayer, and the word preached, and admonition, &c., with which God doth not always so infallibly co-operate as efficaciously to work always that which they serve to.

5. If there were not such a possibility as might and doth sometimes fail out, then every regenerate man, after such a renewed act of repentance, might secure himself against the committing that gross act again for ever; but so he can never do against any particular act of sin but that sin against the Holy Ghost. St Paul therefore exhorts, when a brother is fallen into a sin, to 'restore such a one with the spirit of meekness,' upon this consideration, 'considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted;' and he lays the exhortation upon those who are most spiritual: 'Ye that are spiritual, restore such a one, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted,' Gal. vi. 1; so as he speaks of such as have their hearts raised up to the best frame, through the most deep and serious repentance. And now we will suppose one that hath formerly fallen himself into the same sin which another is fallen into, but not yet restored, but himself is returned by repentance out of it; for, indeed, such a spiritual man is of all other like to be the meekest bone-setter of a man fallen; and even such doth St Paul exhort to consider that themselves may for the time to come be also or in like manner tempted,—that is fall as this man fell,—and therefore so be tempted as to fall into the same sin again that he was fallen into. And if any man could be secure from the like fall again, he had been out of the reach of this exhortation to this duty upon that ground mentioned, as not capable of it. But the Holy Ghost hath elsewhere, 1 Cor. x. 13, told us, that there is no tentation which is common to man but is incident to befall any man at any time; and therefore, ver. 12, exhorts 'him that standeth' to 'take heed lest he fall.' Indeed, that temptation which is common to devils with men, the sin of final despair, and against the Holy Ghost, &c., a regenerate man may, through the grace of Christ, secure himself against; but all such sins as are common to man, from these or any of them, no man, in any state, can, without an extraordinary revelation, secure himself from the commission of.

Only I add these cautions concerning this case:—

Caution 1.—There are two sorts of corruptions. First, more gross corruptions, which St Peter calls τὰ μιάσματα τοῦ κόσμου, 'the defilements of the world,' 2 Pet. ii. 20; they being the common mire or kennel wherein the unclean swine of this world wallow, and which the Apostle calls such 'works of the flesh as are manifest,' Gal. v. 19, even to the light of nature; such as are adultery, fornication, drunkenness, &c.; and by those two expressions do they distinguish them from a sort of more spiritual and refined lusts. For, secondly, there are corruptions more spiritual, as pride, secret love of the

world. Now, for those gross corruptions which are contrary even to common honesty, and, to use Job's phrase, 'are punished by the judges,' chap. xxxi. 11, which profane men wallow in, a godly man hath more strength against them, so as it is not so ordinary for him to be entangled again and again with these. For where but moral principles are, these are abstained from, as we see in the Pharisee,—I am no adulterer, &c.,—therefore, where grace is, much more. And some sins are more opposite to the spirit of holiness, and less compatible with grace, as uncleanness, of which St Paul says, 'God hath not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness,' 1 Thess. iv. 7; it is in an especial manner there opposed to holiness; and such as these are 'works of the flesh, which are manifest,' even to nature, to civil men; and therefore, when they are often fallen into, they do manifest that the heart is but flesh. And although the limits, how seldom or how often, cannot be set concerning relapses into these or any sins, yet, in an ordinary course, it may be said that few godly men fall into such sins again and again. God keeps them from such in an ordinary providence, that scandals should not arise; they being sins which all the world takes notice of. But those other sins of rash anger, and love of the world, and spiritual pride, &c., these being less manifest, and sitting more close to our spirits, godly men are more subject unto.

Caution 2.—Yet, secondly, we must again distinguish:—

(1.) There are the inward lustings to those outward acts now, though grace weakeneth the very lustings within, yet takes them not wholly away: 'The spirit that is in us,'—that is, in us saints,—says St James, 'lusteth to envy;' and as to envy, so to all other sins. And—

(2.) Secondly, there are the outward gross acts of such sins; and therein the weakness of sin in a regenerate man and strength of grace shews itself most in preserving from them. For, as 'to will is present with me,' says St Paul, 'to will what is good, yet how to perform it I am not able,' Rom. vii. 18: so, on the contrary, to lust the heart may be ready, and lust may soon rise up in rebellion, but when it should come to the act there is a weakness discovered; they come to the birth, and want strength often to bring forth; the contrary lusting and prevailing of grace being then seen and discovering itself. That it fareth with a regenerate man in this case often as with a man that is deadly wounded, who riseth up to strike his enemy, and thinks to run him through, but sinks down again, *medio conatu*, when his sword is at his enemy's breast, through a deficiency of spirits. Or as a man in a palsy, or the gout, who thinks he is able to walk till he comes to try, and then he finds a weakness which makes him fall back again. Thus, even when the whole forces of lusts are mustered up, yet the weapons fall out of their hands. Humours, in a healthful constitution, may stir and boake* in the stomach, when yet they come not up, nor prevail unto vomiting. In that place aforenamed, Gal. v., the Apostle seems not to deny but that in the most regenerate lustings may arise; for 'the flesh,' says he, 'lusteth against the spirit,' ver. 17; but yet, as for outward acts, he tells them, ver. 16, 'that if ye walk in the spirit,'—that is, in the prevalency of the spirit, keeping up a holy frame of heart above the flesh,—that then 'ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh:' for that frame of heart so kept up will hinder the outward fulfilling of the lust, which is never done till flesh and corruption is actually raised above the spirit, and gets more voices to carry it; till the spirit be under-hatches and the flesh above, and so steers the helm. Otherwise the lusting of the spirit against the flesh will hinder the outward doing and fulfilling of a lust.

For the reason he gives, ver. 17, 'so as you cannot do what you would,'

* Retch.—ED.

implies, that not only lustings, which arise without consent, may be in such a man, but further, much of the will may be won to consent to them, to like them; when yet there is not strength enough to carry it on to the outward act, 'you cannot do what you would.' And what those works of the flesh are, which are manifest works of the flesh, and which Christians, whilst they walk in the spirit, fulfil not, he mentions and reckons up in the following words. And this is the more ordinary frame of a Christian's heart; for, ver. 24, says he, 'They that are Christ's have crucified the affections and lusts,' that is, so far as not to fulfil them.

Caution 3.—He may more easily fall into a gross sin of another kind than into the same after special repentance for it, and peace spoken in the pardon of it. Because true repentance especially fortifies the heart against that sin which a man hath most repented him of; and sincerity lies more in watching over that sin than any other; so, says David, Ps. xviii., 'I was upright, and kept myself from mine iniquity,' that especial sin which was eminently his sin. A man's arm that hath been broke will, if well set, rather break in some other place than where it was broke at first. Hence sometimes it falls out that that which was a godly man's bosom-sin before conversion continues not to be so after; but another steps up in the room of it, by reason that he then endeavoureth to wash out that great stain most, and spendeth the most of the fuller's soap to purge himself from it, and so becomes ever after most watchful over it, and sets in this, his weakest place, the strongest garrison, and a watch, to prevent the enemy. And as an act of some presumptuous sin, though it inclines the heart more to all sin than before, yet especially to commit that kind of sin again rather than any other; so, on the contrary, is it in a sound and solemn repentance for some especial sin, and in the endeavouring to mortify some especial member of the body of sin, (to mortify which, not only in the bulk and general, but also particularly and apart in the several members of it, the Holy Ghost exhorts. Col. iii. 5,) though thereby the whole habit of the body of sin is purged and weakened, yet that particular sin which we aim especially to have mortified, is, through God's blessing, more subdued than any other. We see idolatry was the sin which the people of Israel relapsed into again and again; yet when they were once thoroughly humbled by the captivity for it, they never returned to it, of all sins else, not to this day: so as it may be said, as was foretold haply in another case, Ezek. xvi. 43, 'Thou shalt not commit this lewdness, of all thy abominations.' Jonah, though he would haply never run away from God again after his jail delivery out of the whale's belly, yet, immediately after peace spoken to his heart, he falls into a sin of another kind, into a passion of extreme anger and peevishness, and quarrelling against God.

And the reason of this especial tenderness to fall into the same sin is, because the conscience looks upon a relapse into that sin to be more heinous than into any other sin of another kind, because of that aggravation of it which thereby would stain and dye it; and although a sin of another kind shews the variety of corruption more, yet this is more against the power and work of repentance itself, which was particularly exercised about that sin; and also breaks and dissolveth all bands of a man's vows, covenants, prayers, &c., made against it in particular, and so is made more grievous. And this we may see in Ezra's humbling himself for that great sin of the people, in joining themselves in marriage with the people of the land, when he did set himself to humble himself for them, together with those 'that feared God,' chap. ix. 4. What a hideous apprehension of the heinousness of that sin, if

they should again fall into it, did that day's repentance raise his heart up unto? as appears, ver. 14, 'Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with them, wouldest thou not destroy us till thou hadst consumed us, and till there was no escaping?' Into which sin yet the people did again fall, after they had repented of it with a solemn confession and promise of amendment, which is recorded chap. x. 11, 12, &c.; yet they returned to it again the second time, as we find in Malachi, who lived the last of the prophets, and after this prayer of Ezra. For, chap. ii. 11, the prophet says, 'An abomination is committed in Jerusalem, for Judah hath married the daughter of a strange god;' and then follows the aggravation, ver. 13, 'This ye have done again,'—that is, the second time, and in that respect are challenged to deal treacherously, and that also in respect they had repented of it the first time,—'covering the altar with tears, with weeping, and with crying out,' as Malachi there speaks, so as 'God regardeth not your offerings any more.' And therefore, also, Ps. lxxviii. 40, 'How oft did they,' saith he, as aggravating their sins, by murmuring 'provoke the Lord?' and, Num. xiv. 22, God reckons up and mentions the times of their sinning, how often they had thus sinned, as an aggravation of them; 'they have tempted me these ten times.'

Caution 4.—He may fall into the same sin again and again, until he hath recovered himself and his peace fully by a thorough repentance, but yet seldom after. Lot committed incest two nights together; but the orifice of his lust was not yet stopped by repentance, the wound was not closed, and so bled again afresh; but when it is healed once, and the heart made perfect with God, and divorced from that sin, and entered into communion with God again, then though it may fall out, yet a man more hardly returns. A woman that is gone from her husband may play the whore a long while with him she ran away withal, till her husband fetches her again: but to run often away, after receiving again, is intolerable. That is not so ordinary in God's child.

Caution 5.—Though we can hardly set limits to say when, or when not, this shall fall out from the degrees of men's repentings,—as that if they have such or such a degree of repentance, then they fall no more,—yet we may further consider a difference of their returnings to God and repentings, and of God's speaking peace:—

(1.) Of their repentings. Some are more imperfect, and but, as it were, thawings of the mind a little, by means of a little sunshine of God's love: some are more thorough and deep, that recover a man, and put him into a sound and healthful estate. As, for example, a man in an ague hath well days, yet his fits return, and it may be they leave him for a month or so, and yet they take him again, as at spring and autumn; which is because all this while his body is not thoroughly recovered to a state of health: so is it with a man's heart, in respect of his lusts; though he may have many well days, wherein he may eat his meat, and receive sweetness in the word and ordinances, yet at times his distempers and aguish fits return, he being aguish still. But in the end, after the peace of God hath more thoroughly established his heart, he attains to some settled, constant victory over it; and when it doth not prevail to victory, such aguish fits end usually in consumptions, in which long agues often end. As in temporaries, in whom, sin overcoming God's striving with them, it eats all good beginnings out; but if they belong to God, then usually that aguish distemper is, in the end, by a more thorough repentance, so healed as that they attain to more victory and security against it than any other sin: that as in those other kind of

tentations, it often falls out that that which a man doubted of most he comes in the end to be most assured of, and to doubt no more; so also here a man becomes most freed from that sin he was long exercised with of all others. So also—

(2.) For God's dealings with his, there is much difference therein to be found. There are some kinds of speaking peace by God, and meltings of the heart of his people, which yet are not of that force as to overcome, but wherein God doth but, as it were, strive with them; which strivings do ever and anon work their hearts to a repentance, and that true and serious; which yet is not so deep and thorough, nor so healing the heart at the bottom, as it should. For God sometimes useth more imperfect kind of strivings, even with his own children, about some particular sin they are to leave, which do not so fully at first prevail and overcome in them; which God doth, to let them see the running issue of their natures, how grace would run out at it, (as the Apostle speaks, Heb. ii. 1,) and overcome grace in them, if he should let it alone: and so lets out upon his child, after many years, some lust which had been long down, which puts him to it exceedingly, so that he is in hazard to be undone, and is put into fears of it; and yet God visiteth his spirit by fits, and, *per intervalla*, at times strives with him. And though he falls, yet he puts under his hand, and gives him well days, and some comfortable visitations; yet such as are not deep enough to work him fully off from it. For as God strives with wicked men, so he sometimes strives with his own also; which may seem to be the true meaning of that speech, Gen. vi., where, having mentioned the sin of his own children, ver. 2, that 'the sons of God took to them wives of that wicked seed of Cain,' he says, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that *he also* is but flesh.' He means not this of all mankind, for he says, *he also* is but flesh. Now, with what other creatures doth he join them in this comparison but with others of the sons of men? So as the meaning is, I see my children, that they also are corrupt and degenerate, as well as the rest of mankind, and my Spirit hath striven with them. In which striving God lets them see how, if he did not in the end shew forth his free love to the full, in the rescuing of them and healing their backsliding, they would be undone. So as, in the end, through his grace, which is sufficient, they obtain the greatest conquest over that lust of any other; when the heart is once thoroughly awakened, and settled in a thorough peace. And as those doubts they were most troubled with once—which though they had at times some light against, yet by fits did still arise—are yet in the end so overcome as they arise no more, but they enjoy the greatest freedom from them; so is it often herein. And these strivings to not overcoming I resemble to the thawings of the ice in a great frost, as when in the daytime the sun shines, and in the sunshine it thaweth a little, but yet so as at night, or in the shade, it freezeth; when sometimes also the weather begins to change for a night, and yet falls a-freezing again: so here there is not such a thorough shedding abroad the love of God in the heart as should make a thorough general thaw, to the purpose, as we say; and so, when the heat of that is withdrawn, it freezeth again; but in the end there comes a more thorough and general thaw and change, that carries all away, melts the heart, and so alters the temper and constitution of the weather, as I may so speak, as it freezeth no more. And such a thawing of his heart had David when Nathan came to him, and not before; though it may be he had those lesser relentings often before.

But let those that are in such a case take heed they be not hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; and of all the times that pass over you in

your lives, these are the most climacterial and critical, and most dangerous. For God will not always strive, but if thou beest his child, if such thawings will not do it, he will use some great afflictions, in the end to divorce the heart and thy sin; his love will one way or other overcome thee, and in the end prevail. As when Israel went on stubbornly in the way of his heart, says God, 'I have seen his ways, and will heal him and guide him,' Isa. lvii. 18; and the Lord may so heal thee as those lusts, of all other, shall not in that gross manner break forth any more. And in those times when God dealeth thus with him, a man will after say, that in such passages of his life he had more free love spent on him than in all his lifetime, before or after; and when he is freed and healed, he will be more thankful and fearful than ever before, or than otherwise he would have been, and so get ground by his stumblings. If any of you, being now in such a conflict as this, in such a vicissitude and chance of war, if yet thou findest a constant fight against thy sin, and that those breakings and meltings of thy heart by God do win ground of it, and that the comforts and hope which at times are vouchsafed do strengthen 'and stablish thy heart in well-doing,' as 2 Thess. ii. 17, and make thee more fearful every time thou risest than ever, so as to look upon another fit, if it should come, (which, knowing the deceitfulness of the heart, thou fearest,) as the fit of some great sickness, lest it should return again; esteeming it as the greatest cross that can befall thee, which thou wouldest buy off with thy blood; and bleedest most of all to think that thou hast so unconstant a heart, which as it hath abused God's love formerly, so thou fearest will do so again;—if thus thou go on to fight it out, the love of God will in the end overcome in thee. But if thou findest that those encouragements from God do, through thy corruption, (which turns God's grace into wantonness,) nourish thy lusts, and make thee less fearful against the next time, and thy heart harder and secure, and to slight sin more, because thou hast been so oft visited from on high, and pardoned; thy case is dangerous, and may prove desperate.

Caution 6.—Though he may return, yet not presently: Luke v. 39, 'He that hath tasted old wine, doth not straightway drink and desire new'—not whilst the love of God, and the taste and relish of it, is fresh in his mouth. When the impression is worn out indeed, and begins to be forgotten, then haply he may return.

Use.—To conclude with the use of this point: If it be folly to run into the same sin, though we repent of it afterwards, then what folly is it in them that utterly fall away, and after they have been enlightened, and tasted of the good word of God, then fall again to the pleasures of sin, and never repent of them? as many do that come and try a little what is in religion and the ways of God, and then return again to their vomits, and never return to piety again. 'Foolish souls, who hath bewitched you? Are ye so foolish that, having begun in the Spirit, ye end in the flesh?' as Gal. iii. 3. Folly indeed, to spend the harvest of your time in seeking God, and then to leave him when you are about to take leave of the pleasures of sin! Alas, poor souls! whither will ye go? Do you ever think to have such a God again? 'Thou hast the words of eternal life,' said the disciples to Christ; and as Saul said to his servants, to keep them from falling away unto David, 'Can the son of Jesse give you vineyards, and make you captains of thousands?' 1 Sam. xxii. 7: so, Can the world give you that peace that I can give you? (may Christ say to you:) yea, and heaven besides hereafter? Is the devil, with all the wages of sin you post after, able to make you amends? You thereby dishonour God in returning to sin, and bring an evil report

the good land, and discredit your master in changing your service; but you befool yourselves most, 'you return to folly.' For even that you think to gain the world's good word and opinion by, even that se; for though they make a spoil of you, and triumph in such, and in their flesh a while, yet they never inwardly think well of such a or truly love him. A backslider is like lukewarm water, having been eated, which good men spue out, and evil men regard not; for what n, indeed, be made of it? 'Like salt that hath lost its savour, it is or nothing but the dunghill.' Like one that hath been married, but ivorced, she is undone for her marriage ever after. Such is the condi- f those that fall away. You who have but turned unto folly, and are own to a despising and despiting God's ways, 'Return, O Shulamite, ' And you that have peace and communion with God, take heed you lose him: you will never have such a God again.

THE TRIAL OF A CHRISTIAN'S GROWTH

IN

MORTIFICATION, OR PURGING OUT CORRUPTION;

AND

VIVIFICATION, OR BRINGING FORTH MORE FRUIT;

A TREATISE

HANDLING THIS CASE,

'HOW TO DISCERN OUR GROWTH IN GRACE:' AFFORDING SOME HELPS RIGHTLY TO JUDGE THEREOF,

BY

RESOLVING SOME TENTATIONS, CLEARING SOME MISTAKES, ANSWERING SOME QUESTIONS, ABOUT SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

TOGETHER WITH

SOME OBSERVATIONS UPON THE PARABLE OF THE VINE, JOHN XV. 1, 2

'LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES FROM ALL FILTHINESS OF FLESH AND SPIRIT, PERFECTING HOLINESS IN THE FEAR OF GOD.'—2 COR. vii. 1.

TO THE READER.

THIS following treatise, *The Trial of a Christian's Growth*, was formerly printed during the time of my absence out of my native country, and by reason thereof had many imperfections and incongruities both in style and matter; which, now being again (through the good hand of God upon me) returned, I have endeavoured to amend: so as, partly through some alteration in the method and frame of it, partly by cutting off some redundancies, I have reduced it to some better shape, and nearer proportion to its fellows.

The scope and way of handling this subject, *growth*, is not doctrinal so much, nor yet hortatory, as either persuading to, or discoursing of a Christian's growth in general, concerning which much hath been already written by others; but the more proper aim of this is to resolve *a case of conscience*, (like as those two other preceding tractates of mine have done,) namely this, *How to discern our growth*, and to answer more usual temptations about it. And so these three treatises being of like sort and kind, and properly belonging to that part of theology which we call *case-divinity*, I have therefore, in this new edition of the whole, ordered to put them together, (which is all the alteration I have made,) although in their first and single publishing some other came between.

If in the performance this falls short of many more raised experiments of growth which are found in such as the apostle John calls fathers, elderly Christians, who with Enoch have walked long with God; yet I have hoped that you that are *young men*, (as he also styles the middle sort of Christians,) that you may find many things helpful to your right understanding and judging of your growth, and which may free you from many mistakes in misjudging thereof, and so consequently of many tentations about it, which that age of believers are more peculiarly incident unto. I dare not say, 'I write these things to you, fathers;' I never presumed it in my thoughts. I myself wrote and preached it when I was but young in years, and for the time far younger in grace and experience. And I dare not (if the great Apostle, 2 Cor. x. 14, would not) stretch myself beyond that measure which God hath distributed

to me: a measure which yet may reach you that are young men, though more eminent grown Christians are gone far beyond the line of it.

The God of grace and peace grant us and all his children spirits endeavouring 'to speak the truth in love' in these dividing times, 'that we may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ,' Eph. iv. 15.

THO. GOODWIN.

April 26, 1643.

THE TRIAL OF A CHRISTIAN'S GROWTH.

INTRODUCTION.

SOME OBSERVATIONS PREMISED UPON THIS PARABLE OF THE VINE:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.—JOHN XV. 1, 2.

The sum and division of the words, and subject of this discourse.

A FAIR and fruitful parable this is, spread forth into many branches, in which, under the pleasant shadow of a *vine*, (upon occasion they had but newly been real partakers of his blood in the fruit of the vine,) Christ elegantly sets forth himself in his relation to his visible church, and the estate of his apostles, and in them of all visible professors to the end of the world; shewing withal, under that similitude, what his Father meant to do with Judas, now gone out to betray him, as with all other unfruitful branches like unto him; even 'cut them off, and throw them into the fire:' but, on the contrary, encouraging them, and all other fruitful branches, that they should still continue to abide in him, with promise that they should yet 'bring forth more fruit.'

The parable hath three parts:—

1. A *vine* here is, of all the fairest, ver. 1.
2. A *husbandman*, of all the carefulest.
3. The end of planting this vine, *fruitfulness*.

1. First, this *vine*, as all vines else, hath two sorts of branches:—

(1.) Such as, though green, bring forth no true fruit, nought but leaves.

(2.) Such as bring forth fruit, ver. 2.

2. The *husbandman* hath answerably offices of two sorts towards them both: αἴρειν, καθαίρειν, which is a witty paranomasia, *amputare et putare*, to lop and cut off. First, clean to cut off those that are utterly unfruitful, which thereupon are 'cast out, do wither, and are gathered and cast into the fire;' so ver. 2, 6. And thus now he meant to deal with Judas. But, secondly, to purge and but lop off the luxuriancies and too much runnings out of the fruitful branches into springs, which they are subject to.

3. Thirdly, his end in all is, that fruit, and more fruit, might be brought forth. This is his end of planting this vine, this is the end of purging these

branches of it, which he being frustrated of in those other is the cause why he takes them clean away.

And to exhort these unto fruitfulness was one main end of Christ's using this parable, and unto this tends all in the following verses, either as *means* or *motives* unto fruitfulness.

First, as *means*—

(1.) He assures them of their being in the state of grace, ver. 3. Assurance is a means of fruitfulness.

(2.) He speaks of purging them by his word in the same verse, 'Ye are clean through the word I have spoken to you.' This is a means he further useth.

(3.) He inculcates into them the sense of their own inability 'to do any thing without him,' ver. 5.

(4.) Therefore to 'abide in him,' and suck from him, ver. 5.

(5.) And to let his 'word abide in them,' by which himself 'shall also abide in them,' and by which they may still be purged, and so be fruitful.

The *motives* are—

(1.) If not, they know their doom; to the fire with them, ver. 6.

(2.) If they do, their prayers shall be granted, ver. 7.

(3.) Hereby his Father is glorified, ver. 8.

(4.) They shall shew themselves his disciples, ver. 8.

(5.) They shall continue in his love, who loves them as dearly as his Father doth him, ver. 9, 10.

And so you have the sum of all this parable.

The principal subject I aim at in this scripture is this main case of conscience, which useth to be the exercise and inquisition of many good souls, *How a Christian may discern his growth, both in purging out corruptions and increase of grace, and the fruits of it.*

Therefore whatever other spreading fruitful observations grow upon this stock, and this vine affords many, we will but shortly, and as men in haste, view and take notice of, but as in our way to that other which I principally intend, and only so far stay upon the observation of them as the bare opening this similitude here used doth give sap and vigour to them.

First observation—How Christ is a vine, and only the true vine.

First, Christ, he is *a vine.* To explain this:—*First,* Adam indeed was a vine, planted in paradise, to bear all mankind upon, but he turned 'a wild one;' he proved not the true vine. God planted him (to allude to that, Jer. ii. 21) 'a noble vine, a holy and right seed,' but he degenerated, and so have all engraffed on him, and so bring forth nothing but 'grapes of Sodom,' as Isaiah speaks.

But, *secondly,* God the Father having many branches of chosen ones, that grew by nature on this cursed stock of Adam, whom yet, as ver. 16, 'he had ordained to bring forth fruit,'—that is, to spring and spread forth in the earth in all ages, and then to be transplanted unto heaven, the paradise appointed for them, the earth being but the nursery of them for a while,—hence therefore he did appoint his own Son to be a new root, as into whom he meant to transplant them, and ordained him to be that bulk, and body, and chief branch, which they all should grow out of, who is therefore called 'the Root of David,' &c., Rev. xxii. 16, and that 'righteous Branch,' Jer. xxiii. 5.

Whom, therefore, *thirdly,* he planted as a root here on earth with us, and clothed with a human nature, a weak and mean bark and body, and a rind and outside such as ours is, that so both root and branches might be of the

same nature, and homogeneal. Which nature of ours in him he likewise 'filled with his Spirit,' as with juice and sap, 'without all measure,' that so he might fructify and grow into all those branches appointed to be in him, by communicating the same Spirit to them.

And, *fourthly*, although he was of himself the fairest cedar that ever the earth bare, yet in relation to those multitudes of branches he was to bear, chooseth to be a vine, which is of all trees the lowest, the weakest, and of the meanest bark and outside of any other; only, because of all others it is the plentifulest of branches, and runs out and spreads its bulk in branches, and those, of all branches else of any other trees, the fruitfulest, it is therefore called 'the fruitful vine,' Ps. cxxviii. 3. And for that reason only doth he single out this comparison as suiting with his scope, shewing therein his love; that as he condescended to the lowest condition for our salvation, so to the meanest resemblances for our instruction, yet so as withal he tells us that no vine nor all the vines on earth were worthy herein to be compared, nor to be so much as resemblances of him.

For he, and he alone, is *the true vine;* that is the second observation.

For take those choicest excellencies in a vine, for which the comparison here is made, as, more particularly, that of fruitfulness either in boughs or fruit, and it is but a shadow of that which is in him. As God only is *I am that I am*, and all things else have but the shadow of being, so Christ alone hath only all the excellencies in him in the true real nature of all things to which he is compared. So in like manner he is said to be 'bread indeed,' John vi. 55, and, ver. 32, 'the true bread from heaven.' Manna, and all other meat, and all that sweetness which is in meat, is and was but a shadow to that which he affords. He excels and exceeds all things he is compared to in what they have, and they are but shadows to him, Heb. x. 1.

First, therefore, never any vine so fruitful. 'All our fruit is found in him,' Hos. xii. 8. 'If you abide in me, you shall bring forth much fruit.' He hath juice to supply you with every grace, to 'fill you with all the fruits of righteousness;' which if the branches want, it is for want of faith in themselves to draw from him, not want of sap in him.

Secondly, This he is at all times, hath been in all ages, thus flourishing; this root never withers, is never dry or empty of sap; it is never winter with Christ. 'Every branch,' saith the 2d verse,—that is, every one that hath borne fruit in any age,—beareth all its fruit 'in him;' branches in him fear no drought, Jer. xvii. 8.

Thirdly, For largeness of spreading, no such vine as this. He, as the Psalmist says, Ps. lxxx. 11, 12, 'sends out his boughs unto the sea, and his branches to the rivers;' all the earth is, or hath been, or shall be, filled with them.

Use—Is to persuade us to take Christ alone, and make him our all in all, because in him all excellencies are supereminently found. All creatures are not enough to serve for comparisons to set him forth, and when they do in part, for some particular thing that is the excellentest in them, yet therein they are but shadows, Heb. x. 1. He only is the truth, he is 'the true light,' John i. 9. The Baptist, Moses, and all lights else were but as twilight, but a shadow. So he is 'the true bread,' 'the true vine;' he hath really the sweetness, the comfort, the excellencies of them all. The like may be said of all those relations he hath taken on him; so he only is a true father and husband, &c., and the love and sweetness in all other fathers and husbands are but a shadow to what is in him.

Second observation—How the Father is the husbandman.

As Christ is thus a vine, so his Father is the *husbandman*, and as strange a husbandman as Christ a vine. For—

First, He is the very root of the vine itself, which no husbandman is to any vine; therefore he that is the vine calls the husbandman his Father, 'My Father is the husbandman.' This vine springs out of his bosom by eternal generation, for this is the derivation of our offspring, chap. xiv. 20, 'I am in my Father, and you in me.' And, chap. v. 26, 'The Father, he hath life' original 'in himself, and gives it to the Son,' and the Son to us, and thence spring living fruits, the fruits of righteousness.

Secondly, He is the engraffer and implanter of all the branches into this vine. Isa. lx. 21, he calls them 'his righteous people, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands.' Other husbandmen do but expect what branches their vines will of themselves bring forth, but God appoints who, and how many shall be the branches, and gives them unto, and engraffs them into his Son.

Thirdly, He appoints what fruit and what store of fruit these branches shall bring forth, and accordingly gives the increase, which other husbandmen cannot do: 'Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but God only gives the increase,' 1 Cor. iii. 6. Though Christ merited, yet the Father decreed every man's measure of fruitfulness.

Fourthly, He is the most diligent husbandman that ever was, for he knows, and daily views, and takes notice of every branch, and of all their fruit; for, says the text, 'Every branch that brings not forth fruit, he takes away,' &c., therefore knows who beareth fruit, and who doth not. He knows their persons, who are his, and who are not, 2 Tim. ii. 19; not so much as one man could come in 'without a wedding garment,' but he spies him out.

Fifthly, The most careful he is daily to purge his vine; so says the 2d verse. And of all possessions, saith Cato, *nulla possessio majorem operam requirit;* vineyards need as much care, and more, than any other. The corn, when it is sown, comes up, and grows alone, and ripeneth, and comes to perfection, the husbandman sleeping and waking, he knows not how, saith Christ; but vines must be dressed, supported, sheltered, pruned, well-nigh every day.

And of all trees God hath most care of his vines, and regards them more than all the rest in the world.

Use 1—Is to honour the Father in all the works tending to our salvation, as much as we honour the Son. If Christ be the vine, his Father means to be the husbandman; and indeed it may teach us to honour all the three Persons in every work that is saving, for in all they bear a distinct office; the Father hath not only a hand in election, but also in sanctification, concerning which this parable was made. If Christ be the root that affords us sap, whence all fruit buds, the Father is the husbandman that watereth the vine, gives the increase, purgeth the branches, and is the root of that life which Christ affords to us; and then the Spirit also comes in to have a work and influence herein also: for he is the sap, though not here mentioned, yet which is implied, which lies hid in this parable of the vine, and appears in all the fruits that are brought forth, therefore called, Gal. v., 'fruits of the Spirit.' None of the three Persons will be left out in any relation, or in any work, that is for our salvation. That ever three so great Persons should have a joint care of our salvation and sanctification, and we ourselves neglect it!

That they should be so careful, we so negligent and unfruitful! If they do all so much for us, what should not we endeavour to do for ourselves!

Use 2.—Be careful of your words, thoughts, ways, affections, desires, all which are the fruits of your souls; for God takes notice of all, he walks in this his garden every day, and spies out how many raw, unripe, indigested performances, as prayers, &c., hang on such or such a branch, what gum of pride, what leaves, what luxuriant sprigs, what are rotten boughs and which are sound, and goes up and down with his pruning-knife in his hand, and cuts and slashes where he sees things amiss; he turns up all your leaves, sees what fruit is under, and deals with men accordingly.

Use 3.—When the church is in any distress or misery, go to him that is the husbandman; such is the usual condition of this his vine, spread over the face of the earth. Complain as they, Ps. lxxx. 12, 'Why hast thou broken down her hedges, so as all they which pass by do pluck her? the boar out of the wood doth waste it.' Complain to him that the hogs are in his vineyard, and do much havoc and spoil therein; and tell him that he is the husbandman who should take care for it. So they go on to pray, 'Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, behold and visit this vine, and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted,' ver. 14, 15.

Third observation—Two sorts of branches in this vine, fruitful and unfruitful: and the difference between temporary and true believers, as they are laid down in the text.

We see this vine hath branches of two sorts, fruitful and unfruitful, which is the third thing to be observed.

And herein our Saviour followeth the similitude; for experience shews the like in vines. And writers of vines observe it, and accordingly distinguish the branches of vines into *pampinarios*, which bring forth nought but leaves, and *fructuarios*, which bring forth fruit.

The unfruitful, they are such as make profession of being in Christ to themselves and others, and receive some greenness from him, but no true fruit. For their profession they are branches; for their emptiness, unfruitful ones.

Quest.—The only question is, How such as prove unfruitful are said to be branches, and to be in Christ; 'Every branch in me,' &c.

Ans. 1.—Many comparisons there are of Christ, as he stands in various relations to his church; whereof some serve to express one thing concerning him, some another. That of a vine here presents him only as he was to spread himself into a visible church on earth, in the profession of him; and so considered, he may have many branches that are unfruitful. That other, of 'a head over all the family in heaven and earth,' imports his relation only to that invisible company of his church mystical, which together make up that general assembly spoken of in Heb. xii., which are his fulness, Eph. i. 23. And agreeable to this meaning—in comparing himself to a vine, in this large and common relation of a root to both sorts of professors, true and false—is that other expression also, whereby he sets forth his Father's office, when he calls him, not ἀμπέλουργος, a vine-dresser, or a tiller of a vineyard, in a strict sense, as Luke xiii. 7, but γεωργός, as it were at large, the husbandman. As thereby denoting out, not simply and alone that peculiar care that he hath to true believers only, that are branches of this vine, though including it, but withal importing that common care and providence which he bears to others of his creatures; and this because some of these branches of this

vine are to him but as others out of the church, and of no more reckoning with him. The Father's relation herein answering to, and in a proportion running parallel along with, that which Christ bears towards them: those that Christ is head unto, those he is a father unto; those whom Christ is but as a vine unto, he is but γεωργός, a husbandman unto, whose office is seen as well in cutting off such branches, as in pruning and dressing of those other.

Ans. 2.—These unfruitful ones are not, in Christ's account, reckoned as true branches here; for, in the 5th verse, he calls those disciples of his that were there and then present with him, (when now Judas was gone forth before, as appears chap. xiii. 30,) them only, the branches; and therefore repeats it there again, 'I am the vine,' with this addition, 'ye are the branches.' Implying hereby, that as he is the true vine, so that these only were the true branches. The other he calls but ὡς κλῆμα, *as* a branch, ver. 6, 'He is cast forth as a branch,' giving them the name of branches, thereby the better to express his Father's dealing with such, that as they that are dressers of a vineyard use to do with such branches, so my Father with them; but they themselves are but *tanquams, quasi palmites, as branches*—not really and in truth such.

Ans. 3.—That expression which seems most to make for it is that in the 2d verse, when he says, 'Every branch *in me* that beareth not fruit;' but those words *in me* may as well, yea rather, be understood to have reference to 'their not bringing forth fruit *in him*,' than to their being properly branches *in him:* so as the meaning should be, they are 'branches that bring not forth fruit in me.' Though they do some good, yet it is not fruit; if so, not in me, though from me, and from my assistance. And so his meaning is not so much to declare that they are branches in him, as that they bring not forth fruit in him, which indeed is one of the characteristical differences between true and unsound branches, and one main scope of the parable; and this the Syriac translation makes for also, and confirms it: *Omnem palmitem qui in me non fert fructum*,—'Every branch which in me bringeth not forth fruit.' And there is this reason that this should be his meaning, that he never reckoned them at all true branches; because that is the difference God puts between these and those other, that 'those that bring forth fruit his Father purgeth, that they may bring forth more fruit.' He lets them not run so far out into sin as to become altogether unfruitful; but these 'he takes away:' so as true branches were never unfruitful.

Use.—The use is to stir up all that profess themselves to be in Christ to examine whether they be true genuine branches of this true vine or no. Here in this kingdom, Christ is spread forth into a fair and pleasant vine in show, as this earth affords. But if we ministers were able, with this husbandman here, to turn up the leaves of formal profession, and look with his eyes, we should discern that there are but a few true branches indeed to be found in flourishing congregations, as Isaiah foretold there should be in Israel: chap. xvii. 6, 'Like the gleaning grapes, two or three in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches.'

Now for a general help to discern whether you be true branches, consider, that union with Christ is it that makes men branches; that is, men are accounted branches of Christ in regard of some union with him: and such as their union is, such also is their communion with him, and accordingly such branches are they, and such their fruit.

1. Some, and indeed the most, are united to him but by the external tie of the outward ordinances, such as their obligation made in baptism; and

are knit to him thereby, no otherwise than many graffs are, that do not take or thrive in their stocks, only stand there as bound about by a thread. And suitable is their communion with him, even wholly external; they continuing to partake of the outward ordinances, but without any sap or inward influence derived, without any inward work of the Spirit, or stirring of affection. And answerable also is their fruit, when no other are found on them but such as you shall find grow in the waste of the wilderness among heathens, which ingenuity, and modesty, and natural honesty, and natural conscience do bring forth; but not any such as an inward sap from Christ useth to produce. Civil men are not true branches; for look on Christ, the root, and see what fruits abounded in him most, as fruits of holiness did; and therefore if such were true branches, the same would abound in them likewise, for every tree brings forth according to its kind.

2. You have some, they living in the church, Christ begins to shoot some sap of his Spirit into their hearts, quickening them with many good motions, and stirring up some juiciness of affections in the administration of the word and sacraments, which causes them to bud forth into good inward purposes and outward good beginnings; but this being not the communication of the Spirit, as sanctifying and changing the branch into the same nature with the root, therefore it comes to pass they are still nipped in the bud, as the stony ground was, and the sap stricken in again, like rath ripe fruit, which looking forth upon a February sun, are nipped again with an April frost. Many, when young, and their affections are green and tender, are wrought upon, and bud, but the scoffs of men nip them, and their lusts draw the sap another way, as hopes of preferment, and the pleasures of sin, and so these buds wither and fall off, and the Spirit withdraws himself wholly in the root again. Again—

3. Some there are, as the thorny ground, in whom this inward sap communicated to them, though not spiritually changing and renewing them, yet being communicated in a further degree, abides in them longer, shoots up farther, and these prove exceeding green branches, and are owned for true, even by the people of God themselves, as Judas was by the apostles, and therefore are outwardly like unto them; for how else are they said to 'be cast out?' ver. 16, who therefore had once some fruit to commend them, for which they were accounted of by the people of God, and received amongst them, 'who judge of trees by the fruit.' Neither are their fruits merely outward, like Solomon's 'apples of gold, in pictures of silver,' merely painted; but they have a sap that puts a greenness into what they do, and by reason of which they bear and bring forth; for how else are they said 'to wither' also? ver. 6, which is a decay of inward moisture and outward greenness. And these also have some kind of union with Christ as with a *Lord*, 2 Pet. ii. 1, he 'ascending to bestow gifts, even upon the rebellious also,' Ps. lxviii. 18, so far to enable them to do him some service in his vineyard. They are not united unto Christ as unto an *Head;* neither is it 'the spirit of adoption' which they do receive from him. And such a branch was Judas, who was not only owned by the disciples, who knew him not to be false, but who surely at the first had inward sap of gifts derived from Christ, to fit him for the ministry, he being sent out as an apostle to preach; whom therefore Christ here aimed at in this place.

Now for a more particular differencing of these branches and their fruits, it is not my scope to engraff a large commonplace head of all the differences between temporaries and true believers upon this stock; this root is not big enough to bear them, those differences being many. Only I will explain

those differences which the text affords, because they are in our way, and will further open the words.

Difference 1.—That which they do bring forth is not true fruit; the Holy Ghost vouchsafeth it not that name; they are said here not to bring forth fruit. That speech in Hos. x. 1 will give clear light to understand this, with the ground of it also; Israel is there called 'an empty vine, which brings forth fruit to herself.' It implies a seeming contradiction that it should be called an empty vine, and yet withal to bring forth any fruit. And these bring forth, not leaves, good words only, but good works, good actions, and those green; and therefore, Jude 12, their fruit is said to wither, as themselves are said to wither here, ver. 6. And as there Israel is said to be an empty vine, though it hath fruit, so here these are said 'not to bring forth fruit' at all. Now the meaning of both is one and the same; for a thing is said to be empty when it wants that which is proper to it, and ought to be in it, as wells are called empty when they are not full of water, they are full of air: for *non datur vacuum*. So they are called an empty vine, and these branches to have no fruit, because not such as ought to grow upon them, such as is proper to the root they seem to grow upon. Therefore, in Heb. vi. 7, that epithet is added, '*meet* herbs,' or fruit,—that is, such as should grow there. So Luke iii. 8, they are to 'bring forth fruit *worthy* amendment of life,' or else they were to be cut down,—that is, such as became true repentants, as were answerable, suitable thereunto: as we say a man carries himself worthy of his place, when answerably to what is required of him in it. That place forecited out of Hosea further acquaints us with the true ground why their fruits, though green, which, chap. vi. 4, is called goodness also, yet were not to be accounted meet fruit, and so not fruit at all; even because of this, that it brought forth all its fruit, whether good or bad, to itself,—that is, those ends that did draw up the sap, and did put it forth in fruit, were drawn but from themselves, they bring them not forth principally to God, and for him. All their prayers, all their affections in holy duties, if they examine the reason of them all, the ends that run in them all, and whence all the motives that do actuate all they do in these, they will find they are taken from themselves. And though the assistance wherewith they are enabled to do what they do is more than their own, yet their ends are no higher than themselves, and so they employ but that assistance God gives them wholly for themselves. Now the end for which a true branch brings forth fruit is, that God might be glorified. Thus, Rom. vii. 4, when 'married to Christ,' they are said to 'bring forth fruit to God;' which is spoken in opposition to bringing forth fruit to a man's self. Thus also Christ here useth this as the great and main motive to fruitfulness in ver. 8, 'Hereby is my Father glorified, that you bring forth much fruit.' Now whom will this move? into whose affections will such an argument draw up sap and quicken them? None but those hearts who do make God's glory their utmost end; and so all true branches do, or else this motive should have been used by Christ in vain unto them. And as this end makes their performances to be fruit, so this being wanting, all that is brought forth deserves not the name of fruit, for it is not fruit worthy, as the Baptist says, not meet fruit for the dresser to receive, as was noted out of the Hebrews, not such as ought to grow on that tree. They should be 'trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified,' Isa. lxi. 3. Again, not fruit meet or suitable for the root it seems to grow upon,—that is, such as Christ did bring forth, for he did all that his Father might be glorified; and therefore, says he, exhorting them to fruitfulness, ver. 8 of

this chapter, 'If you do likewise, ye shall be my disciples.' Again, otherwise it is not such as is meet for the husbandman's taste and relish, it being equal that 'he that planteth a vineyard should eat of the fruit of it,' 1 Cor. ix. 7. And in fruit, you know, above all we regard the taste, and esteem the relish of it. Eve first considered the 'fruit was good for food,' then 'pleasant to the eye,' Gen. iii. It is not the sap that is in fruit only makes it acceptable; crabs are as full of sap as apples. Nor is it the greenness, or colour, or bigness, but the relish that is the chiefest excellency in it, though those other, when joined with a good relish, do make it more desirable. So though thy performances be full of life and affection, and green, and long, and many, yet if they relish and taste of none but self-ends, God regards them not, they are not *ad gustum suum;* it is the end that gives the relish, and makes them fruits, and acceptable to God.

Difference 2.—The second difference this text holds forth is, that they bring not forth their fruit in Christ; for so the Syriac translation reads it, as making the sense to be that 'they bring not forth fruit in me:' and so this particle *in me* referreth not so much to their being branches in him as to not bearing their fruit in him. Which indeed seems to have been Christ's meaning, for his scope in this parable is to shew how that he is the root of sanctification; and how not the habitual power only, but every act of grace, and the performance, comes from him: 'Without me ye can do nothing,' ver. 5. And thereupon he exhorts his disciples to fetch all from him, and to 'abide in him;' and therefore, also, when he speaks of these unfruitful branches at ver. 6, that which here he calls 'bearing not fruit in me,' he expresses there by 'not abiding in me,' as the cause of their not bringing forth fruit in him. Yea, and the principal scope of that phrase, 'Abide in me,' is, (as evidently appears by ver. 4, 5,) to depend upon him for bringing forth of fruit, and to fetch strength from him by faith. There is therefore this essential defect in the work that is upon such, that they do not do all in that dependence upon Christ, such a dependence as a branch hath upon the root in bringing forth its fruit. For, my brethren, this you must know, that as it is essential to evangelical sanctification to do all for another, as your end, namely, to God; so to do all in the strength of another as your sole assistant, namely, Christ, who works all in you, and 'through whose strength,' saith Paul, 'I am able to do all things,' and nothing without it. 'The life we lead is by faith,' and it is 'not I, but Christ who lives in me.' Therefore we find both these joined, Phil. i. 11, 'The fruits of righteousness by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God.' The latter, *to the glory of God,* is mentioned as the final cause; the other, *by Jesus Christ,* as the efficient cause. Both these are necessary unto true sanctification. For as we are to honour the husbandman by making him our end, so also the root, by doing all in him and from him. Now temporary believers, as they do all principally for themselves, so also all as from themselves; and as they do not make God their end, so nor Christ their root. And so some expound that phrase in the parable of the stony ground, Luke viii. 13, when it is said they 'have no root,' (though I think he means also inherent habits of grace infused, for it is added, 'no root *in themselves,*' which Job calls the root of the matter which was in him,) it is because they fetch not their strength to do all they do from Christ by faith, and from their union with him. And the reason is this, because they are never emptied of themselves, which is the root we all do grow upon, either in regard of their own ends or of their own efficiency of working. Whereas we must all be brought to nothing in ourselves, both in regard of self-aims

and also abilities of working; and till our hearts are inwardly taught that lesson, that 'we are not sufficient as of ourselves,' we will not go out of ourselves to do all in Christ; and therefore there was nothing which Christ endeavoured more to engraff upon their hearts than this principle, now at his departure, as it is ver. 4, 5. And indeed it is as hard a thing for nature to live out of itself and fetch all from another, as not to live to itself but to another. We are full of our own strength as well as of our own ends. And although these unfruitful branches they do indeed receive all their strength from Christ, and so all they do in what is good is from him; yet they do not honour Christ in receiving it by doing all as in his strength, and so do not do it as in him. But though they receive all, yet they work with it as if it were their own stock, and so 'glory,' as the apostle says, 'as if they had not received it.' And thus though the sap and liveliness which stirs them is really and all efficiently from Christ, yet they may be said to bring forth fruit in themselves, because both they neither fetch nor receive it by faith, nor act by faith that strength received, as men that were acted by Christ, and as working all in Christ; but they do all as if all proceeded from their own root. Even as the ivy, though it clasping about the oak receives much sap from it, which it digesteth and turneth into itself, yet it brings forth all its berries by virtue of its own root, rather than as in the oak, which yet sustains and supplies it with juice and sap. Whereas a true believer brings forth fruit in Christ, as a branch that is in and of the oak itself, as its own root, and so 'from him all their fruit is found,' Hos. xiv. 8. He fetcheth his assistance from him; whereas the inward assistance of another unsound branch is strengthened and supported by pride, and self-sufficiency of gifts and parts, and not derived by faith, and maintained by confidence in Christ's strength to act all in them. So that, as it is said of the Corinthians, that they 'reigned, but without us,' says Paul; so I may say, temporaries perform duties, and pray, but as without Christ. But all true believers are emptied first of their own strength and ability, and so walk as those who can 'do nothing without Christ,' as those who are not able to love, believe one moment more without him. So Phil. iv. 13, 'I am able to do all things,' but 'through Christ that strengtheneth me.' And this they lay for a principle in their hearts which they walk by, which therefore Christ presseth upon his disciples here, as the main requisite and fundamental principle of evangelical sanctification, 'Without me ye can do nothing.' And therefore such a one is sensible of that cursed self-sufficiency in him, and humbleth himself, checks himself for it, as for as great and foul a sin as any other; and humbleth himself not only for the want of what life and stirring, &c., should have been in the duty fallen short of in performing it, but also for that he sanctified not Christ in the strength he received to do it with. But another doth not so; if he finds strength, and power, and vigour to perform, and quickness in the performance, he looks no farther. That poor man in the gospel, as he acknowledged his want of faith, that he had much unbelief in him, so he goes out to Christ for the supply, 'Lord, help my unbelief,' for he knew that it was he was to be the worker of every degree of faith in him. And again, a true believer being thus sensible of his own inability, doth, when he is anything assisted, attribute all to Christ when he hath done; and honours him as the author of it in himself; confesseth in his heart, between Christ and himself, that it was not he, but Christ that strengthened him. 'It is not I,' says the Apostle, 'but the grace of God in me, though I have laboured more than they all.' But another, though he receives all, yet not being emptied of himself, 'boasteth as if he had not received it.' As the

Pharisee, though he thanked God in words, yet in his heart attributed all to himself. Such a one is the more full and lift up when he hath done, but the true branch more empty and humble. A true believer glories not of himself as in himself, but only as he is 'a man in Christ;' and that as a man in Christ, he did thus or thus: as Paul did, and no otherwise. So, 2 Cor. xii. 2, 'I knew a man in Christ,' &c. 'Of such a man I will glory, but of myself I will not glory.' And yet it was himself he spake of, but yet not in himself as of himself, but as he was in Christ.

Quest.—And if it be asked, Whether in every act a Christian doth thus?—

Ans.—I answer, it is in this as in that other parallel to this, the making God a man's end. Now, as it doth not require that in every action a man should actually think of that his end, whilst yet habitually he makes it his aim; —as a man in his journey doth not think of the place he goes to in every step he takes, yet so habitually hath it in his thoughts as he keeps in the way to it;—parallel to this is it in doing all in Christ: it cannot be supposed that in every act a man hath such a distinct thought of recourse to Christ; but at the beginning and entrance of greater actions, he still hath such actings and exercise of faith; and also often in the progress he reneweth them; and in the conclusion, when he hath performed them, he doth sanctify Christ in his heart, by ascribing the praise of all unto him.

Quest.—If, in the second place, the question be, Whether every true believer doth from his first conversion thus distinctly and knowingly to himself fetch thus all power from Christ, and do all in him?—

Ans. 1.—The answer is, that to all believers this principle of having recourse to Christ for acting their sanctification may haply not presently be so distinctly revealed as it hath been to some. This indeed is common and absolutely necessary to all believers, to constitute and make them such,—namely, that their faith should have recourse to Christ, and to take him for their salvation, in the large and general notion of it, as it enfolds all under it that is to be done to save them; and thus many more ignorant do, when yet they have not learned explicitly in every particular that concerneth their salvation, to have frequently a distinct recourse unto him. It is probable that these very disciples of Christ, who yet savingly believed, had not this particular principle of bringing forth all their fruit of holiness in Christ as their root, until this very time and sermon whereby Christ informed them in it, so clearly revealed to them, nor till then so clearly apprehended by them. For ignorant they were of, and negligent in having recourse to, Christ in many other particulars, and making use of him therein, which are of as much concernment as this. They had not so distinctly and explicitly, as would seem, put their prayers up in Christ's name: 'Hitherto you have asked nothing in my name,' John xvi. 24. Neither had they so frequently exercised faith on Christ in all things as they had upon God. Therefore, John xiv. 1, he calls upon them, 'Ye believe in God, believe also in me.'

Ans. 2.—Many sorts of principles believers' hearts may secretly have been taught, which also habitually they practise, and yet they may be exceeding hidden and latent in them in respect of their own discerning them; as was the case also of these disciples. John xiv. 4, says Christ, 'The way,' namely, to heaven, 'ye know;' and yet, ver. 5, Thomas says, 'How can we know the way?' and then, ver. 7, Christ says of them again, that 'they knew him and the Father;' and yet, ver. 8, Philip again saith to him, 'Lord, shew us the Father,' speaking as if they were ignorant of him, for Christ rebukes him, ver. 9, and tells him he had 'both seen him and his Father.' Those principles of atheism and unbelief,—as those sayings in the heart, that there

is no God, &c.,—of which the Scriptures speak so much, they are the principles that act and work all in men that are wicked and carnal, and are the encouragers and counsellors to all the sins committed by them; and yet they are least of all discerned by them of all other corruptions, for they are seldom or never drawn forth into distinct propositions, or actually thought upon, but do lie as common principles taken for granted, and so do guide men in their ways. And thus it is, and may be long, with some of the contrary principles of faith; they may act all secretly in the heart, and yet not be discerned, until called forth by the ministry of the word, or some distinct information, when it comes more distinctly to clear such a practice to them.

Ans. 3.—Neither is union with Christ presently cleared up to all believers; which, whilst it is darkly and doubtfully apprehended by them, Christ's communication of his grace and strength to them in every action remains doubtful also, and is not discerned by them. Of these disciples Christ says, John xiv. 20, 'That in that day'—namely, when they received the Comforter more fully, of the promise of whom he there speaks—'they should know that they were in him, and he in them.' But not so clearly was this as yet apprehended by them. And so likewise that intercourse betwixt Christ and them, both for grace and comfort, &c., was not so clearly discerned by them, though continually maintained by him in dispensing all grace and power to them.

Ans. 4.—And yet, in the meanwhile, take the lowest and poorest believer, and he doth these five things, which put together is really and interpretatively a bringing forth their fruit in Christ, though not in their apprehensions:—

(1.) In that their hearts are trained up in a continual sensibleness of their own insufficiency and inability for any good thought or word, as of themselves; for 'poverty of spirit,' to see their own nothingness in this respect, is the first evangelical grace, Matt. v. 3. And if the contrary would arise in them, to think, through habitual grace alone received, they were able of themselves to do good, it is checked soon, and confuted by their own experience, both of their own weakness, being sure to be left to themselves, as Peter was when confident in his own strength; as also by those various 'blowings of the Spirit' in them 'as he pleaseth,' with which, when their sails are filled, they are able to do anything, but when withdrawn they lay wind-bound, though all habits of grace be hoist up and ready, and not able to move of themselves. Now this principle of self-emptiness, habitually to live by it, no carnal heart in the world hath it, or doth live by it. And—

(2.) For this assistance they are trained likewise up, from the first, to have a continual dependence upon a power from above, without which they find they are able to do nothing, to come from God and from the Spirit of Christ, with a renunciation of themselves; which implicitly is the same with this immediate intercourse with Christ, and is really equivalent thereunto, though they hit not at first haply on the right explicit notion thereof, as having not been taught it by the ministry of the word, or other ways, in that distinct manner that others do. And yet in honouring the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, they honour Christ, who sends that Spirit into their hearts, even as in 'honouring the Son' Christ says that 'we honour the Father also,' although our thoughts may sometimes more distinctly be exercised towards one of the three Persons more than to another.

(3.) And, thirdly, when they are once taught from the word that it is the

duty of a Christian, and part of the life of faith, to live thus in Christ, and to bring forth all in him, and so come distinctly to apprehend this as requisite to a right bringing forth of fruit, then their hearts instantly do use to close with the truth of it, as being most suitable and agreeable to that holy frame of their own spirits, which are evangelically wrought to glorify Christ all manner of ways that shall be revealed. There is an instinct, a preparedness in their faith to make Christ their all in all, as any particular comes to be revealed to them, wherein they ought to exalt him in their hearts; and so this being once revealed to be one way whereby they are to honour him, if they have gone on before in a confidence on their own graces, 'henceforth they do so no more;' yea, they humble themselves as much for so robbing Christ of glory, or neglecting of him, in not having had that distinct recourse to him, as for any other sin. And—

(4.) Though haply after all this, yet still their union with him is not cleared to them, and so their communion with him herein, as must needs, doth still remain dark also. They therefore neither discern that they have any true communion with his person, nor can say how strength comes from him; yet having been thus taught to fetch all from him, as was formerly explained, they do, in a continual renunciation of their own strength, deny all offers of assistance from any other strength,—as, namely, that which their gifts and parts would make,—even as they deny unlawful lusts or by-ends, and they still have their eyes upon Christ to work in them both the 'will and the deed;' and so by a faith of recumbency, or casting themselves on him for strength in all, such as they exercise towards him for justification, Gal. ii. 16, 'they live by faith on the Son of God,' and have thereby such a kind of faith, a continual recourse unto him. Upon which acts of true faith being exercised by them towards him, he, as he is pleased to dispense it, moves them, and works and acts all in them, although still not so sensibly unto their apprehensions as that they should discern the connexion between the cause and the effect; nor can they hang them together, that is to say, know *how* or *that* this virtue doth come from Christ, because their union with him is as yet doubtful to them, and also because the power that worketh in believers is secret, and like that of the heavens upon our bodies, which is as strong as that of physic, &c., yet so sweet and so secretly insinuating itself with the principles of nature, that as for the conveyance of it, it is insensible, and hardly differenced from the other workings of the principles of nature in us: and therefore the Apostle prayeth for the Ephesians, 'that their eyes may be enlightened to see the power that wrought in them,' Eph. i. 18, 19. Yet so as—

(5.) Their souls walk all this while by these two principles firmly rooted in them, both that all good that is to be done must and doth come from Christ, and him alone; and that if any good be done by them, it is wrought by him alone, which do set their souls a-breathing after nothing more than to 'know Christ in the power of his resurrection.' And having walked thus in a self-emptiness and dependence upon Christ by way of a dark recumbency, when once their union with him comes to be cleared up unto them, they then acknowledge, as they, Isa. xxvi. 12, that 'he alone hath wrought all their works in them;' that they are nothing, and have done nothing. And though before this revelation of Christ, as Christ said to Peter, 'What I do now thou knowest not, but thou shalt know,' so they knew not then that Christ had wrought all in them, yet then they know it; and when they do know and discern it, they acknowledge it with the greatest exaltation of him, they having reserved, even during all that former time of their empti-

ness, the glory for him alone, staying, as Joab did for David,* till Christ come more sensibly into their hearts, to set the crown of all upon his head.

This I thought good to add, to clear this point, lest any poor souls should be stumbled.

Fourth observation.—In the most fruitful branches there remain corruptions unpurged out.

The fourth doctrine is, That in the most fruitful branches there remain corruptions that still need purging out.

This is taken but as supposed in the text, and not so directly laid down, and I shall handle it but so far as it makes way for what doth follow. What shall I need to quote much Scripture for the proof of it? Turn but to your own hearts, the best will find proofs enough of it.

Reason 1.—That God might thereby the more set forth and clear unto us his justifying grace by Christ's righteousness, and clear the truth of it to all our hearts. When the Apostle, long after his first conversion, was in the midst of that great and famous battle, chronicled in that 7th of Romans, wherein he was led 'captive to a law,' and an army of sin within him, 'warring against the law of his mind,' presently upon that woful exclamation and outcry there mentioned, 'O miserable man that I am,' &c., he falls admiring the grace of justification through Christ,—they are his first words after the battle ended,—'Now,' says he, 'there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ.' Mark that word *now;* that now, after such bloody wounds and gashes, there should yet be no condemnation, this exceedingly exalts this grace; for if ever, thought he, I was in danger of condemnation, it was upon the rising and rebelling of these my corruptions, which, when they had carried me captive, I might well have expected the sentence of condemnation to have followed; but I find, says he, that God still pardons me, and accepts me as much as ever upon my returning to him, and therefore I do proclaim with wonder to all the world, that God's justifying grace in Christ is exceeding large and rich. And though there be many corruptions in those that are in Christ, yet there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, that walk after the Spirit, though flesh be in them. And this at once both *clears* our justification by Christ's righteousness alone, and also *magnifies* and extols it.

It *clears* it; therefore how doth this remaining of corruptions afford to our divines that great demonstration against the Papists, that we are not justified by works, nor are those works perfect, which they so impudently affirm against their own experience, even because corruption stains the best, and 'our best righteousness is but as a menstruous cloth.'

And as it clears it, so likewise it *extols* it; for how is grace magnified, whenas not only all the sins and debts a man brought to Christ to pardon at first conversion are pardoned, but after many relapses of us, and provings bankrupt, we are yet still set up again by free grace with a new stock; and though we still run upon new scores every day, yet that these should still be paid, and there should be riches of love enough and stock enough, that is, merit enough to hold out to pardon us, though we remained in this mixed condition of sinning to eternity, this exceedingly advanceth the abounding of this grace.

Reason 2.—It serves exceedingly to illustrate the grace of perseverance, and the power of God therein; for unto the power of God is our perseverance wholly attributed. 1 Pet. i. 5, 'Ye are kept,' as with a garrison, as the

* Apparently referring to 2 Sam. xii. 28.—ED.

word signifies, 'through the power of God unto salvation.' And were there not a great and an apparent danger of miscarrying, such a mighty guard needed not. There is nothing which puts us into any danger but our corruptions that still remain in us, which 'fight against the soul,' and endeavour to overcome and destroy us. Now, then, to be kept maugre all these, to have grace maintained, a spark of grace in the midst of a sea of corruption, how doth this honour the power of God in keeping us! As much in regard of this our dependency on him in such a condition, as he would otherwise be by our service, if it were perfect, and we wholly free from those corruptions. How will the grace of God under the gospel triumph over the grace given Adam in his innocency; when Adam having his heart full of inherent grace, and nothing inwardly in his nature to seduce him, and the temptation that he had being but a matter of curiosity, and the pleasing his wife, and yet he fell; whenas many poor souls under the state of grace, that have but mites of grace in comparison, and worlds of corruption, are yet kept not only from the unnecessary pleasures of sin in time of prosperity, but hold out against all the threats, all the cruelties of wicked persecutors in times of persecution, which threaten to debar them of all the present good they enjoy! And though God's people are foiled often, yet that there should still remain 'a seed within them,' 1 John iii. 9, this illustrates the grace of Christ under the gospel. For one act in Adam expelled all grace out of him, when yet his heart was full of nothing else. Were our hearts filled with grace perfectly at first conversion, this power would not be seen. The angels are kept with much less care, and charge, and power than we, because they have no bias, no 'weight of sin,' as the Apostle speaks, hung upon them to draw them aside and press them down, as we have.

Reason 3.—Neither would the confusion of the devil in the end be so great, and the victory so glorious, if all sin at first conversion were expelled. For by this means the devil hath in his assaults against us the more advantages, fair play, as I may so speak, fair hopes of overcoming, having a great faction in us, as ready to sin as he is greedy to tempt; and yet God strongly carries on his own work begun, though slowly, and by degrees, backeth and maintains a small party of grace within us to his confusion. That as in God's outward government towards his church here on earth, he suffers a great party, and the greater still by far, to be against his church, and yet upholds it, and 'rules amongst the midst of his enemies,' Ps. cx. 2, so doth he also in every particular believer's heart. When grace shall be in us but as a spark, and corruptions as much smoke and moisture damping it, grace but as a candle, and that in the socket, among huge and many winds, then 'to bring judgment forth to victory,' that is a victory indeed.

Reason 4.—Lastly, as God doth it to advance his own grace, and confound the devil, so for holy ends that concern the saints themselves; as—

(1.) To keep them from *spiritual pride*. He trusted the angels that fell with a full and complete stock of grace at first, and they, though raised up from nothing a few days before, fell into such an admiration of themselves that heaven could not hold them,—it was not a place good enough for them: 'They left,' the text says, 'their own habitation and first estate,' Jude 6. 'Pride was the condemnation of the devil,' 1 Tim. iii. 6. But how much more would this have been an occasion of pride to a soul that was full of nothing but sin the other day, to be made perfect presently? Perfectly to justify us the first day by the righteousness of another, there is no danger in that, for it is a righteousness without us, and which we cannot so easily boast of vainly; for that faith that apprehends it empties us first of our-

selves, and goes out to another for it. But sanctification being a work wrought in us, we are apt to dote on that, as too much upon excellency in ourselves. How much ado have poor believers to keep their hearts off from doting upon their own righteousness, and from poring on it, when it is, God wot, a very little! They must therefore have something within them to pull down their spirits, that when they look on their feathers they may look on their feet, which, Christ says, are still defiled, John xiii. 10.

(2.) However, if there were no such danger of spiritual pride upon so sudden a rise,—as indeed it befalls not infants, nor such souls as die as soon as regenerated, as that good thief,—yet, however, God thinks it meet to use it as a means to *humble* his people this way; even as God left the Canaanites in the land to vex the Israelites, and to humble them. And to have been throughly humbled for sin here will do the saints no hurt against they come to heaven; it will keep them nothing for ever, in their own eyes, even when they are filled brimful of grace and glory. For—

[1.] Nothing humbles so as sin. This made him cry out, 'O miserable man that I am!' He that never flinched for outward crosses, never thought himself miserable for any of them, but 'gloried in them,' 2 Cor. xii. 10, when he came to be 'led captive by sin' remaining in him, cries out, 'O miserable man!' And—

[2.] It is not the sins of a fore-past unregenerate estate that will be enough to do this throughly; for they might be looked upon as past and gone, and some ways be an occasion of making the grace after conversion the more glorious. But present sense humbleth most kindly, most deeply, because it is fresh; and therefore says Paul, 'O miserable man that *I am!*' And again, we are not able to know the depth and height of corruptions at once, therefore we are to know it by degrees. And therefore it is still left in us, that after we have a spiritual eye given us, we might experimentally gauge it to the bottom, and be experimentally still humbled for sin. And experimental humbling is the most kindly, as pity out of experience is. And—

[3.] God would have us humbled by seeing our dependence upon him for inherent grace. And how soon are we apt to forget we have received it, and that in our natures no good dwells! We would not remember that our nature were a step-mother to grace, and a natural mother to lusts, but that we see weeds still grow naturally of themselves. And—

[4.] God would have us not only humbled by such our dependence on him, but by a sense of our continual obnoxiousness to him, and of being in his lurch; and therefore leaves corruption still, that we might ever acknowledge that our necks do even lie on the block, and that he may chop them off; and to see that 'in him we' should not only 'live and move' as creatures, but further, that by him we might justly be destroyed every moment, this humbles the creature indeed, Ezek. xxxvi. 31, 32.

(3.) As thus to humble them, so that they might have occasion to *deny themselves;* which to do is more acceptable to God than much more service without it, and therefore the great promise of 'having a hundred-fold' is made to that grace. It was the great grace which of all other Christ exercised. Now, if we had no corruption to entice and seduce us, what opportunities were there for us thus of denying ourselves? Christ indeed had an infinite deal of glory to lay down, not so we. Unless there be a self in us to solicit us, and another self to deny those solicitations, we should have no occasions of self-denial or the exercise of any such grace. Therefore Adam was not capable of any such grace, because he had no corruption to seduce him.

And therefore a little grace in us, denying a great deal of corruption, is in that respect, for so much as is of it, more acceptable than his obedience. Though we have less grace, yet in this respect of a higher kind in the exercises of it.

Use 1.—To be meek and charitable to those who fall into sin, as knowing corruption is not fully yet purged out of thyself. This is the Apostle's admonition upon this ground, Gal. vi. 1, 'If a man be overtaken in a fault,'—he speaks indefinitely, that any man may,—if it be but an overtaking, not a sinning wilfully and obstinately, but a falling by occasion, through rashness, suddenness, and violence of temptation, &c.; 'ye which are spiritual, restore such a man with the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.' He would have every man be meek in his censure, and in his reproof of such a one, and restore him, and 'put him in joint again,' as the word signifies: for still he may be united to Christ, as a bone out of joint is to the body, though for the time rendered thereby unuseful. And do this, says he, with tenderness and pity, 'with the spirit of meekness,' which a man will not do unless he be sensible of his own frailty and subjection to corruption, unless he reflects on himself, and that seriously too. *Considering*, saith the Apostle there, as implying more than a slight thought,—I may chance to fall also; but the seeing and weighing what matter of falling there is in thine own heart, if God but leave thee to thyself a little while; this works a spirit of meekness towards such a one. For meekness and pity is most kindly when we are sensible of the like in ourselves, and make it our own case. And this he speaks to the most spiritual Christians; not to those who are as yet but as carnal, as he speaketh of the Corinthians, Christians newly converted, who—finding their corruptions at the first stounded with that first blow of mortification given them, and though but in part killed, yet wholly in a manner for a while laid asleep, and having not as yet, after their late conversion, had a fresh experience of the dangers and temptations a man after conversion in his progress is subject to—are therefore apt to imagine they shall continue free from assaults, and think not that their lusts will get up again, and so are prone to be more censorious of the falls of others. But you, who are more spiritual, to you I speak, says the Apostle, for you are most meekened with a sense of your own weakness; and even you, says he, if you 'consider yourselves,' and what you are in yourselves, have cause to think that 'you also may be tempted.'

Use 2.—Never set thyself any stint or measure of mortification, for still thou hast matter to purge out. Thou must never be out of physic all thy life. Say not, Now I have grace enough, and health enough; but as that great Apostle, 'Not as if I had as yet attained,' for indeed thou hast not; still 'press forward' to have more virtue from Christ. If thou hast prevailed against the outward act, rest not, but get the rising of the lust mortified, and that rolling of it in thy fancy; get thy heart deaded towards it also; and rest not there, but get to hate it, and the thought of it. The 'body of death,' it must not only be 'crucified with Christ,' but 'buried' also, and so rot, Rom. vi. 4, 6; it is 'crucified to be destroyed,' says the Apostle there,—that is, to moulder away more and more, after its first death-wound.

Fifth observation—That branches that have brought forth true fruit, God takes them not away.

The fifth doctrine is, That those who are true branches, and bring forth any true fruit pleasing to God, though they have many corruptions in them, yet God takes them not away, cuts them not off. The opposition implies

this, he speaks of 'taking away' the other; not so of these, but 'purgeth them.' It is an elegant paranomasia, αἴρει, καθαίρει, which the Holy Ghost here useth.

For an instance to prove this, wherein I will also keep to the metaphor here used, I take that place, Isa. xxvii., where this his care of fruitful branches, with the very same difference put between his dealing with them and the unfruitful that is here, is elegantly expressed to us. God professeth himself the keeper of a vineyard, his church, ver. 2, 3, 'I the Lord do keep it;' and, ver. 6, 'He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the earth with fruit.' But Israel having corruption in him which would hinder his growth, he must be lopped and cut. And so, in the next verses, God is said to deal with him; but not so as to cut them off, as he doth others that are both his and their enemies. 'Hath he smitten them as he smote those that smote him?' No. For 'in measure when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it.' When Israel is but a tender plant, and first shooteth forth, he doth but in measure debate with it, that is, in such a proportion as not to destroy it, or cause it to wither; but that it may blossom more, he measures out, as it were, afflictions to them, but 'stays his rough wind,' as it follows, that is, such afflictions as would shake that his plant too much, or quite blow it down; but such a wind as shall make it fruitful, and blow away its unkindly blossoms and leaves, so much, and no more, will he let out of his treasury, even he who holds the winds in his fists, and can moderate them as he pleaseth. For his scope and purpose is nothing less than to cut off Jacob, both root and branch, because of corruptions and sins that do cleave to him. 'But this is all the fruit to take away the sin,' says he, ver. 9,—that is, this is the fruit of that wind, and of all these his dealings with them; and it is *all* the fruit,—that is, all that he intends thereby, even to purge them.

But doth he deal so with others? No; for 'the boughs of the most fenced city wither, and are broken off and burned,' ver. 10, 11.

Reason 1.—First, because in Christ God accepts a little good, and it pleaseth him more than sin in his doth displease him. And therefore, as in nations he will not destroy the righteous with the wicked, so nor in men will he cast away their righteousness that is in them for a little wickedness' sake, but will rather purge out the one, and so preserve the other. This we have expressed under the same metaphor, Isa. lxv. 8, we have in hand: 'Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it;'—that is, look as when a man is about to cut down a vine, and his axe is even at the root of it, and one standing by spies a cluster upon it that hath new wine in it, (which also argues there is sap still in the roots, which may yet bring forth more,) Oh, says he, destroy it not: even so says God of nations and men that fear him, of nations where he hath many holy ones. So there it follows, 'So will I do' with Israel, 'for my servants' sake I will not destroy them all:' so it follows there; and thus he likewise says of particular men, There is a blessed work in such a man's heart, though mingled with much corruption, 'Oh, destroy it not.' Take away the sin if possible, but cut not off the man. Why should his grace perish with his wickedness? Every dram of grace is precious; it cost the blood of Christ, and he will not suffer it to be destroyed.

Reason 2.—Because he hath ordained that all the fruits of his children should remain, John xv. 16. Now, if they should be cut off, their fruit would wither, their work must perish with them. Now, no man's work shall 'prove in vain in the Lord,' 1 Cor. xv. 58. But though the world, and all works

and lusts of the world, will, with their makers, come to nothing, 'yet he that doth the will of God endureth for ever,' 1 John ii. 17. As the works of Christ in himself are eternal, so his works in us are eternal also, because they are the fruits of what he did: 'He that soweth liberally, and gives to the poor, his righteousness remains for ever.'

Reason 3.—Because he loves the person, and hates only the sin; therefore he preserves the one, destroys only the other. 'This is all the fruit, to take away the sin.' Thus, Ps. xcix. 8, 'He forgave the persons, and took vengeance only on their inventions.' The covenant that is made with us in Christ is not a covenant made with works, but with persons; and therefore, though the works be often hateful, yet he goes on to love the persons; and that he may continue to love them, destroys out of them what he hates, but cutteth not them off. A member that is leprous or ulcerous, a man loves it as it is 'his own flesh,' Eph. v. 29, though he loathes the corruption and putrefaction that is in it; and therefore he doth not presently cut it off, but purgeth it daily, lays plasters to it to eat the corruption out: whereas a wart or a wen that grows to a man's body, a man gets it cut off, for he doth not reckon it as his flesh.

Reason 4.—Therein God shews his skill, that he is able to deal with a branch which hath much corruption in it, so artificially as to sever the corruption, and let the branch stand still. Utterly to cut down, and make spoil of all, there is no great skill required to it; but to lop the branches in the right place, and due time and season, so as they may become fruitful, this is from the skill of the husbandman. Come to unskilful surgeons with a sore leg or arm, and they seeing it past their skill, they talk of nothing but cutting it off, and tell you it is so far gone that there is no way else; but come to one that is skilful indeed, that discerns it is not so perished but it may be cured, and he will try his art upon it. And so doth God with branches and members that have much corruption in them: he tries his skill upon them, makes a great cure of a leg or an arm where he discerns some sound flesh, though much corrupted; he can cut out the dead flesh, and let the sound remain, and so makes it whole in the end.

Use 1.—Of comfort to those who are true branches, and continue to bring forth fruit in the midst of all the trials that befall them, that God will not suffer them to be cut off by their corruption. If anything in them should provoke God to do it, it must be sin. Now for that, you see how Christ promiseth that God will take order therewith, and will purge it out of them. In Ps. lxxxix. 28–30, this is the covenant made with David, (as he was a type of Christ, with whom the same covenant is made sure and firm,) that 'if his seed forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments,'—What! presently turn them out of doors, and cut them off, as those he meant no more to have to do with? What! nothing but utter rejection? Is there no means of reclaiming them? Never a rod in the house? Yes,—'then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes,' whip out their stubbornness and sinfulness; 'but my loving-kindness will I not take from him' as I did from Saul, as it is 1 Chron. xvii. 13.

Let the saints consider this, that they may return when they are fallen, and submit to him and his nature, and suffer him to do what he will with them, and endure cutting, and lancing, and burning, so long as he cuts them not off; endure chastening, and all his dealings else, knowing that all the fruit is but to take away the sin, to make them 'partakers of his holiness;' and 'if by any means,' as Paul speaks of himself, as Phil. iii. 11, be the means what it will, it is no matter. And God, if at any time he seems to

cut thee off, yet it is but as the incestuous Corinthian was cut off, that 'the flesh might be destroyed, and the spirit saved.'

Use 2.—Of encouragement to go on still to bring forth more fruit to God. For if you do, God will not cut you off; 'he will spare you as a man spares his son that serves him;' he will not take advantage at every fault to cast one off. It was his own law, Deut. xx. 19, that such trees as brought forth fruit fit for meat, they should not destroy when they came into an enemy's country. 'Doth God take care of trees?' No, it was to teach us that if we bring forth fruit, he will not destroy us, if it be fruit indeed fit for meat. Oaks bring forth apples, such as they are, and acorns, but they are not fit for meat; such trees they might cut down. So, if thou bring not forth such fruit as is for God's taste and relish, wherein thou sanctifiest not God and Christ in thy heart, thou mayest and wilt be cut down, but else not. If thou beest betrothed to Christ, and he hath begotten children on thee, fear not a bill of divorce, he will not lightly cast thee off. And it is a good argument to use to him, desire him to spare thee by all the children he hath begotten on thee. Children increase love between man and wife; so between Christ and us.

Sixth observation—That unfruitful branches God in the end cuts off, and the several degrees whereby he cuts off professors that are unfruitful.

That unfruitful branches God in the end takes away,—as he did Judas, who was here especially aimed at,—for proof take Ps. cxxv. It is a psalm made of purpose to shew the different estate of the professors of religion. Those that are 'upright,' ver. 4, he saith, God will continue to do them good, and 'they shall be as Mount Zion,' and all the gates of hell shall not be able to remove one of these mountains. But because there are many that like planets go the same course with the other orbs, and yet have some secret byway besides of their own, of these he says, 'Those that turn aside into crooked ways, God will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity,'—that is, in the end he will discover them to be what they are. And though they go amongst the drove of professors like sheep, yet God will detect them, either in this life or in the life to come, to be goats. Though they did not seem to be workers of iniquity, yet God will lead them forth with them.

Reasons why God dealeth thus with them:—

Reason 1.—Because they dishonour the root which they profess themselves to be graffed into. They profess themselves to be in Christ. Now, he is a fruitful root, full of sap, and for any to be unfruitful in him is a dishonour to him. When you see unfruitful branches upon a tree, you blame the root for it; so doth the world blame the grace of Christ, the profession of Christ, yea, even the root itself, for the unfruitfulness of the branches. Therefore, that they may dishonour the root no more, he takes them away, cuts them off from that root they seemed to stand in, and then they run out into all manner of wickedness.

Reason 2.—Because the husbandman hath no profit by them: Heb. vi. 8, 'The ground that bringeth forth thorns, and not fruit meet for him that dresseth it, is nigh to cursing.' In the 8th of the Canticles it is said, 'Solomon had a vineyard, and he let it out to keepers,' &c. He speaks this of Christ, of whom Solomon was a type, and of his church; and his comparison stands thus: Solomon being a king, and having many vineyards for his royalty,—for the riches of ancient kings lay much in husbandry,—he let them out to vine-dressers, and they had some gain by them; but 'Solomon must have a thousand,' and they 'but two hundred;' the chief gain was to

come to Solomon. So the vineyard that God had planted here below, he lets it out to men, and they shall have some profit by it, you shall all have wages for the work you do, yet so as the chief gain must return to God; he must have a thousand for your two hundred. But when men will have all the gains that is in what they do, set up their own ends only, and the husbandman shall have none, such branches he takes away, because they are not for his profit, for it is made a rule of equity, 1 Cor. ix. 7, 'that he that planteth a vineyard should eat of the fruit of it.'

Reason 3.—Because of all trees a vine is good for nothing else but to bring forth fruit, as we see it expressed to us, Ezek. xv. 4; it is good for nothing but the fire when it becomes unfruitful. Other trees are good for building, to make pins of, but not the vine. And this similitude God chose out to shew, that of all trees else, professors, if unfruitful, are good for nothing; their end is to be burned.

Now if you ask, How God taketh them away? the degrees he doth it by are set down here, ver. 6, 'If a man abide not in me,' &c.,—that is, fall away,—then, 1. They are *cast out;* and, 2. They *wither;* 3. They are *gathered;* 4. They are *burned.*

1. They are *cast forth,*—that is, out of the hearts of God's people, out of their company, out of their prayers, yea, and out of their society by excommunication often; and many times they cast out themselves, being given up to such errors as discover them to be unsound. As Hymenæus and Philetus, they were forward professors, so that their fall was like to have shaken many of the fruitful branches, insomuch that the apostle was fain to make an apology about their fall: 'Nevertheless the foundation of God remains sure,' 2 Tim. ii. 19. God gave them up to such opinions and heresies as discovered their hearts to be rotten and unsound. So also he gives these carnal professors up to such sins as will discover them. This was the case of Cain; he brought forth some fruit, for he sacrificed; yet because not in sincerity, he envied his brother, and was given up to murder his brother, upon which it is said that 'he was cast out of the sight of the Lord,' Gen. iv. 16,—that is, cast out of his father's family, and from the ordinances of God there enjoyed, and made a vagabond upon the face of the whole earth, which of all curses is the greatest. Or else, as was said, they of their own accord 'forsake the assembly of the saints.' The Apostle makes this a step to the sin against the Holy Ghost, Heb. x. 25. He saith, that when men forsake the assemblies and company of the people of God, public and private, and love not to quicken and stir up one another, or begin to be shy of those they once accompanied, they are in a nigh degree to that which follows in the next verse, 'to sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth.'

2. Being thus cast forth, they *wither,*—that is, the sap of abilities which they once had begins to decay; that life in holy duties and in holy speeches begins to be withdrawn, and their leaves begin to fall off; they cannot pray nor speak of holy things as they were wont. Thus it is said of such professors, Jude 12, that 'their fruit withereth,' even here in the eyes of men; for when God casteth them out, then he withdraws his Spirit from them; and then, although they come to the ordinances, yet they have no breathings. They come to prayer, and the Spirit of God is departed; and so by degrees God withdraws sap from them till they be quite dead. Thus he dealt with Saul; when he had discovered himself by sparing the Amalekites and by persecuting David, it is said, 'the Spirit of God departed from him,' and he withered ever after, all his gifts vanished, and the spirit or frame of heart he once had departed from him. So likewise they that had not 'gained by their

talents,' Matt. xxv. 26, their 'talents were taken from them,' even in this life, and the Spirit of God, which rested upon them, rested upon some other that were more faithful.

3. Lying long unfruitful, in the end it is said they are *gathered*. Our translation hath it, 'men gather them,' which either respects a punishment in this life, that when they are cast out from the society of God's people, wicked men gather them, they fall to those that are naught. Popish persons or profane atheists take them, as the Pharisees did Judas, when he cast himself out of the society of the apostles. Or else it may in a metaphor refer to the life to come; the angels, they are the reapers, they 'gather them in the last day,' and bind them in bundles for the fire.

4. So, lastly, it is said, they are *cast into the fire*, and they burn. A man would think he needed not to have added that, for being cast into the fire they must needs burn; but his meaning is, that of all other they make the fiercest, hottest fire, because they are trees most seared, and 'fuel fully dry,' as the prophet speaks.

Use.—You, then, that profess the name of Christ, take heed that you be fruitful branches indeed. I say to you, as the Apostle saith, Rom. xi. 19, 20, 'Because of unbelief they were broken off · thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear.' Take heed that it be fruit that you bring forth: do all for God, make him your end in all, bring forth more fruit every day, let your fruit be riper and more spiritual daily, labour to spread and root yourselves as much downward in inward holiness as you do upward in outward profession, and purge yourselves continually, lest that which is threatened here befall you, which are fearful things to be spoken, and yet concern many a soul. The Apostle compares such to 'trees twice dead, and plucked up by the roots.' You were born dead in Adam; since that you have had perhaps some union with Christ by common graces; if you wither again, then you are 'twice dead,' and therefore fit for nothing but to be stubbed up and cast into the fire. And if any soul begin to forsake the assemblies of the saints, or be cast out from them, let him look to himself lest he wither in the end, and be twice dead, and so he never come to have life put into him again; that is, repent and return again. And know this, that if you, being cast out by the church and people of God, break your hearts, so that you mourn for your sin, as the incestuous Corinthian did, it is a sign you are such branches as God will yet make fruitful; but if, being cast out, you begin to wither, as here, the end will be burning.

PART I.

OF GROWTH IN *VIVIFICATION*, AND BRINGING FORTH MORE FRUIT.

He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.—JOHN XV. 2.

CHAPTER I.

That all true branches in Christ do grow.

GROWTH in grace is the main thing held forth unto us in these words; and therefore I make it the chief subject of this discourse.

Now as in the work of sanctification at first there are two parts, *mortification* and *vivification*, so our progress in that work hath two parts also apart to be considered, and both here in the text:—

1. A growth in mortification, or purging out of sin: 'He purgeth it.'

2. A positive growth in holiness, and all the fruits of it: 'That it may bring forth more fruit.'

And my purpose is accordingly to treat of these two distinctly and apart by themselves. And although purging out of sin is here first mentioned, yet our growth in fruitfulness shall have the first place in the method of handling of them; both because growth in positive holiness, and bringing forth more fruit, is the end and perfection of the other, and so chiefly intended; the other but subserving unto this, and is accordingly made mention of here by Christ, 'He purgeth it, *that* it may bring forth more fruit.'

Now, in handling this first head, I shall do three things:—

First, In general, shew that all true branches do grow in grace and fruitfulness, and the reasons of it.

Secondly, Propound such considerations by way of explication as may conduce to satisfy the tentations of such Christians as discern not their growth herein.

Thirdly, Explicate more largely, by way of trial, what it is to bring forth more fruit, thereby further to help believers to discern and judge aright of it.

My scope in this discourse being not so much to give means or motives unto growth as helps to judge of and try our growth, and prevent such mistakes herein as Christians are apt to fall into.

First, In general, to demonstrate that all true believers do grow more or less in fruitfulness. I shall give both proofs and reasons of it.

For proofs out of Scripture, those two places, Hos. xiv. 5 compared with Psalm xcii., where the Holy Ghost singleth out the choicest trees and flowers in the world on purpose to express the saints' fruitfulness, and their growth therein, will suffice.

As, first, to shew the sudden springing up of the new creature, as it falls out upon some men's conversions, or upon the saints' recovery again after falls, he compares them to the lily, Hos. xiv. 5, whose stalk, though long hid in the earth, when once it begins to feel the dew, grows up oftentimes in a night. But yet a lily is but a flower, and soon decays.

Therefore, secondly, to shew their perpetuity and stability, together with their growth, the prophet there compares them to the cedar, whose wood rots not, proverbially put to express immortality—*Digna Cedro*—and which is not only most durable, but of all trees the tallest, and shoots up the highest.

But yet, thirdly, suppose the new creature be kept under and oppressed with tentations and oppositions, yet to shew that still it will grow and flourish again, therefore he further compareth them to a palm-tree, which useth to grow the more weight is hung upon it, and sprouts again even when it is cut down to the roots.

Fourthly, to shew that they grow with all kinds of growth, therefore the prophet expresseth their growth both by the spreading of their root and also of the branches, and so in a growth both upward and downward, 'He shall cast forth his roots as Lebanon,'—that is, grow inwardly in habitual grace in the heart, and then outwardly 'spread forth their branches,' and so grow in the outward profession of God's ways and truth, and external holiness in their lives.

Neither, fifthly, is it a growth merely in bulk, but also in fruitfulness, and therefore he compares them to the olive and the vine, (so in that place of Hosea,) which are of all trees the fruitfulest and most useful to God and man, Judges ix. 9, 13.

But yet, sixthly, trees have a flourishing time of it but for some while, during which, although they may be thus green and fruitful, yet in their age they wither and rot, and their leaves fall off, and their fruit decays. The Holy Ghost therefore, as preventing this exception to fall out in the saints' growth, he adds, Ps. xcii., 'They bring forth fruit still in their old age.' When nature begins to decay, yet grace renews its strength; which if it be wondered at, and how grace should grow and multiply, the soil of our hearts being a stepmother to it, 'From me,' says Christ, 'is thy fruit found,' ver. 8 of that 14th of Hosea. 'It is God that gives this increase, and I will be as the dew to Israel,' ver. 5.

The reasons why Christians do thus grow are drawn—

1. From Christ's being our head, and we his members. Now although clothes, though never so gorgeous, grow not, yet members do. This similitude the apostle useth in two places, to express the growth of the saints, Eph. iv. 15, 16, and Col. ii. 19, where he saith, Christ is a head, 'from whom the whole body grows up to him in all things.' Now the consequence of this reason will many ways appear:—

(1.) If no more but that there might be a conformity of the head and members, it was meet we the members should grow; 'for we are predestinated to be conformable to the image of his Son,' Rom. viii. Now Christ 'did grow in wisdom,' Luke ii. 40, 42; and therefore so must we. But—

(2.) As he is our head, he hath received all fulness, to that very end that we might grow even to 'fill all in all,' Eph. i. 23.

Now we are empty creatures at his first taking of us. John x. 10, 'I came,' says Christ, 'that they might have life;' and not only so much as will keep body and soul together, as we say, but 'that they might have it more *abundantly*.' Why is grace called life, and of lives the most excellent, but

because it containeth all the essential properties of life in it? Now the main properties of life are to move and grow. The stars they have a moving life, but they grow not; the sun increaseth not, for all its tumbling up and down. as snow-balls do; plants they have a growing life, but they move not out of their place: but in grace there is both. It is an active thing, and it is a growing thing also; and because the more it is acted the more it grows, therefore its growth is expressed by its motion. Yea—

(3.) As his fulness is for our growth, so our growth makes up his fulness, even the fulness of Christ mystical, though Christ personal is full without us. Therefore the stature that every Christian grows up to is called, Eph. iv. 13, 'the stature of the fulness of Christ.' In like speech to this, Eph. i. 23, it is said that 'his body is his fulness;' and, Eph. iv. 13, the growth of these members is said to be 'the fulness of Christ.' So that as Christ should be a head without a body if he had no members, and his body a lame body if he wanted any of those his members; so it would be found a disproportioned body, as it were, if any of these members should not grow to that stature God hath appointed them. So that as there will be *plenitudo partium*, a fulness of parts, no member lacking, so also *plenitudo graduum*, no degree of growth wanting in any part; that so Christ, who filleth all in all, may be fully full. And as there would be a deformity if any one should not grow,—as to have a withered member were a dishonour to the head;—so to have any one grow *in immensum*, to too great a stature, would breed as great a deformity on the other side; therefore he adds, that 'every member hath its measure.' The hand grows according to the proportion of a hand, and so the rest; and so in the 13th verse he hath it, that there is a 'measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ' that every one attains to.

2. The second reason is taken from God the Father—

(1.) Who first hath appointed, as who shall be members, so also what growth each of these members shall attain to; therefore it is called 'an increasing with the increase of God,' Col. ii. 19. Other parents appoint not what stature their children shall attain to, but the Lord doth, that when they meet in heaven there may be a proportion in the body; as all Christ's 'members were written in God's book,' so the growth of them also.

(2.) He hath promised that they shall grow; therefore it is said, Ps. xcii., 'They shall bring forth fruit in their age, to shew the Lord is faithful,' which respecteth his promise; for faithfulness is the fulfilling a promise.

(3.) God the Father hath accordingly appointed means to that end, principally that they might grow. As—

[1.] Eph. iv., it is said he hath 'given gifts unto men,' not that they may be converted only, but also to 'build them up for the edifying of the body of Christ.' He speaks as if that were one main end. Therefore the word is not only compared to seed, that begets men, but to milk also, that so babes may grow, and to strong meat, that men may grow, and thus that all sorts of Christians may grow. So also sacraments, their principal end is growth, and not to convert, but to increase; as meat puts not life in, but is ordained for growth where life is already.

[2.] He gives his Spirit, which works growth in the hearts of his people; and by him they have a nutritive power conveyed from Christ. For it might be said, though there be never so much nourishment, if they have no power to concoct it, still they cannot grow; therefore the Apostle says that there is an 'effectual working to the measure of every part,' Eph. iv. 16, the same power working in us which raised up Jesus Christ from death to life, Eph. i. 19.

3. The last reason is taken from the saints themselves: they could not otherwise enter into heaven; which I take from that place, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.' He speaks this to his disciples, who were converted before; but saith Christ, Unless ye grow, there being a further measure appointed you of my Father, you cannot enter into heaven. There is therefore as great a necessity to grow as to be born again, or else we cannot enter into heaven.

CHAPTER II.

An explication how the saints do grow.—Many considerations to satisfy those that discern not their growth.

HAVING given you the reasons, I will now explicate the point.

And that chiefly for the satisfaction of those whose main doubts and troubles about their estate are occasioned by their want of discerning themselves to grow, and so call into question the work begun, because not carried on so sensibly unto perfection as they expect and desire.

Their objections are many and diverse.

They say, when they were young, they then had more spiritual enlivenings and quickness of affections, more joy in duties, &c.; that formerly they had more zeal in what they did for the good of others, and more fruit of their labours; that heretofore they have spent more time in duties, in conference, and hearing, &c.; that others start up who have more grace the first day than they have been getting many years. Yea, they are so far from discerning that they grow, that they rather think that they fall back, and therefore fear even the truth of grace in them, because all believers grow.

Now, the scope of all which I shall speak of this argument will tend to this, to help such to discern and judge aright of their estates herein, and to free them from such mistakes and errors as their objections are usually founded upon.

I. And, first, concerning this kind of tentation and trouble, let me premise this one observation, concerning what sort of converts this temptation is aptest to seize on.

You all know that there are two more eminent and conspicuous manner of conversions of God's people usual in the church. The conversion of some is more sudden and apparent, like the bringing of Joseph out of a dungeon into a marvellous glorious light. It is with a sudden change, which therefore is accompanied with a mighty violent inundation and land-flood of humiliation for sin, increased with many gracious enlargements and dews from heaven; which afterwards abating, and the stream settling and growing less, and coming to an ordinary channel, and falling but unto so much as the natural spring of grace, as I may so call it, will serve to feed, they then begin to call all into question for their want of growth. Others, on the contrary, whose conversion hath been insensible, and carried on with a still and quiet stream, and have had a more leisurely, gentle thaw; and their change from darkness to light hath not been sudden, but as the breaking forth of the morning, small at first, and not discernible at what time day began then to break: these, on the contrary, are exercised rather about the truth of the work begun, about the work of conversion itself, and the right beginning of all at first; but their tentations arise not from a want of growth so much, for this to them is more evident and sensible, being like 'the morning light, which grows clearer and clearer unto the perfect day,' Prov. iv. 18.

Now, observe the different condition of these two sorts. The former of these hath a more apparent work at first to shew as the evidence of their estate, but are apt, through desertions, neglects, and carnal presumption, to call into question their progress in it, and from thence to question the truth of that first work begun. The other, on the contrary, sees a constant spring and stream increasing, but cannot shew the well-head, or when or where the spring began. So that so apparent a work of grace begun would become matter of assurance to the one, but is checked with want of discerning growth answerable to such beginnings. But an apparent growth, and fast going up of the building, comforts the other, but yet so as they still are apt to question whether the foundation of such a building be well and surely laid; that they are going on further to perfection, this they clearly see, but whether they come in at the right gate or no, that is the scruple which exerciseth their spirits. Thus hath our wise God, as in the work of his providence, so of his grace, 'set the one against the other,' as Solomon speaks, that unto both these there might be occasion of exercise left, that neither might confide in any works wrought upon them, but fly alone to Christ; and that neither should rejoice against the other, or be discontented with that way wherein God hath dealt with them.

II. In the second place, there are some considerations to be added concerning a Christian's discerning his spiritual growth, which will be profitable to the thing in hand.

1. As, first, that our growing in grace is a mystery to be apprehended by faith rather than by sense; our spiritual life itself is carried along by faith, much more the discerning the increase of it. Yea, and it being carried on by contraries, as by falls and desertions, and even by our own opinions of our decrease, therefore it is rather discerned by faith than sense, for 'faith is the evidence of things not seen.'

2. Secondly, the eager desire that many Christians have to have more grace, together with their going on to discern more and more their wants, which in some respect is a growth, these do keep them from thinking that indeed they do grow. 'There is,' as Solomon says, 'that maketh himself poor, and hath great riches,' Prov. xiii. 7; because he enlargeth his desires still, therefore still he thinks himself poor. So hungry and greedy Christians, looking still to what they want, and not to what they have, are still complaining and unthankful. If thou wouldst discern thy growth, do not compare the copy with thy writing, but rather thy writing now with thy writing at the first. For this is a sure rule, that the better thou learnest to write, the better copy doth God daily set thee,—that is, gives thee to see more strictness in the rule, and so still mayest think that thou wantest as much, and art as far short as at first, if thus thou comparest thyself with nothing but thy sight of the rule itself.

3. The third consideration: that if growth at any time be made sensible, and be discerned by sense, yet so as after a while it is not so discernible as that great change which was made upon a man's first conversion; the reasons whereof are—

(1.) For at first conversion the change was specifical, wholly from want of grace unto beginnings of grace; but the change in our growth afterwards is but gradual,—that is, but addition of more degrees only, of something of the same kind still; and therefore it doth not so eminently affect the heart as the change at first conversion doth. To be translated out of a prison to a kingdom, as Joseph was, would affect more than to have new kingdoms *added to* one that is a king already, as Alexander had.

(2.) Because then the newness makes a great impression. One that begins anew to study any art, his growth is sensible, because everything he reads is new; whenas afterwards in his reading he meets with the same thing again and again, and with new notions but now and then, and yet he studies, it may be, harder, and learns what he knew before more perfectly, and adds new to his old.

4. A fourth consideration to discern thy growth: there must be time allowed; 'For the time,' says the Apostle, 'they might have been teachers,' Heb. v. 12, implying they must have had time to grow up to perfection. Christians do not grow discernibly till after some space. The sun goes up higher and higher, but we discern not its progress till after an hour's motion. Things most excellent have the slowest growth: bulrushes grow fast, but they are weaker kind of plants; herbs, and willows, and alder-trees grow fast, but full of pith; oaks more slowly, yet more solidly, and in the end attain to a greater bulk.

5. Fifthly, consider the growth itself; there may be a great difference thereof in several men. You heard that every man hath a measure appointed to which he must grow; but men are brought to this fulness several ways, which makes a difference in their growth.

(1.) First, some have the advantage of others at first setting out; God gives them a great stock of grace at first, and that for these causes:—

[1.] When there is a present use of them. Paul was 'the last of the apostles, born out of time,' as himself complains, as one that was set to school long after the rest of the apostles, and yet came not behind any of them in grace, because God was to use him presently. To some God gives five talents, to others but two; so that he that hath five hath as much given him at first as he that had but two with all his gains all his lifetime.

[2.] When a man is converted late, as he that came into the vineyard at the eleventh hour was furnished with abilities to do as much as the rest, for they all received but a penny.

(2.) Secondly, in the manner of their growth some have advantage of others.

[1.] Some grow without intermission, as that great Apostle, and the Colossians, who 'from the first day they heard of the gospel, brought forth fruit,' Col. i. 6. Others have rubs, and for some time of their lives stand at a stay. And thus some do presently after their first conversion, as the church of Ephesus, who 'fell from her first love.' Others in old age, as the Hebrews, 'who when for the time they might have taught others, were so far cast behind, that they had need be taught again the first principles' of religion, Heb. v. 12. Measure therefore not so your growth by a piece of your lives, but by comparing your whole life together.

[2.] Some die sooner, and therefore God fits them for heaven sooner. Dorcas died 'rich in good works;' Stephen died 'full of the Holy Ghost,' Acts vii. It is with several Christians as with several planets: the moon goes her course in a month, the sun in a year, the rest in many years, so as often they that live shortest grow fastest.

CHAPTER III.

What it is to bring forth more fruit explicated negatively by removing many mistakes.

LET us now see what it is wherein Christians may be said to grow, that so you may be able to discern what it is to bring forth more fruit.

And this I will explicate two ways :—

I. First, negatively; what it is not to bring forth more fruit really, though in appearance and in show it be a growth in fruit, which occasions many mistakes.

II. Secondly, positively; what it is truly to bring forth more fruit.

I. For the first :—

1. First, to grow is not only or chiefly to grow in gifts or abilities, as to preach and pray, &c., but to increase in graces: in gifts only, so reprobates may grow; yea, and so true believers may grow, and yet not bring forth more fruit. The Corinthians grew fast this way in respect of gifts; they were 'enriched in all utterance and knowledge, and came behind in no gift,' 1 Cor. i. 7, and yet he tells them that they were 'babes and carnal,' chap. iii. 2, 3. And therefore in the 12th chapter, after he had spoken of gifts, and endeavouring to excel therein, as they did, he tells them that indeed they were things to be desired, and therefore exhorts them to 'covet the best gifts;' but yet, says he, 'I shew unto you a more excellent way,' in the last verse of that 12th chapter. And what was that? It follows in the 13th chapter, even true grace, charity, love to God, and love of our brethren. A dram of that is, says he, worth a pound of the best fruit of gifts. And so his discourse, chap. xiii., doth begin, ver. 1, 'Though I speak with tongues of men and angels, yet if I have not charity,' &c. Gifts are given for the good of others, to edify them especially, 1 Cor. xii. 7; but graces, as love, faith, and humility, these are given to save a man's own soul, and therefore therein is the true growth. Yet as concerning this I will propound a caution or two :—

Caution 1.—Indeed, growth in gifts, together with growth in sanctification running along with it, will increase our account; for God will crown his own gifts in us, if, as they come from Christ, so they be used in him, and for him, in our intentions; but otherwise they puff up and hinder. They serve indeed to set out and garnish the fruit, and to help forward the exercise of graces; they are good fruit-dishes to set the fruit forth. But if grace grow not with them, we bring not forth much fruit, for at best they are but blossoms, not fruit.

Caution 2.—Again, men are indeed to endeavour to grow in these gifts of memory, and instructing others, and conferences, &c. As was said to Timothy, 'Let thy profiting appear to all,' 1 Tim. iv. 15; and to the Corinthians, 'Covet the best gifts,' especially whilst you are young; yet we are not simply thereby to take an estimate of our growth.

Caution 3.—Though this let me withal add, that often by increasing in grace a man increaseth in gifts, and for want of increasing in grace, gifts also do decay. The talents being used faithfully, were doubled, and unfaithfully, were lessened.

And this consideration may help to answer some doubts and objections which some Christians have about their growth; as, because they cannot pray so well as others, nor do so much service to the saints as some do, therefore they bring forth less fruit. Thou mayest bring more fruit for all that, if thou walkest humbly in thy calling, and prayest more fervently, though less notionally or eloquently. By how much the more we are humble, prize ourselves less by them, and use them in Christ and for Christ, seeing they come all from him; the more we are contented to want them, and not envy others that have them; so much the more fruit we bring forth, even in the want of such gifts.

Again, decay in gifts, as in old age, doth not always hinder men from bringing forth more fruit. As, although they cannot remember a sermon so well as they had wont, nor preach with that vigour, and vivacity, and quickness when they are old, nor be so active, stirring, forward, it follows not that they bring not forth more fruit. David when he was old could not govern the kingdom, nor do the church that service he had done formerly, yet true fruit he might grow in, in regard of his personal carriage towards God for his own salvation. A musician when he is young is able to sing sweetlier than when he is old; or when his vigour decays, his joints grow lame, he cannot play as he had wont; yet still he may grow a better musician, and have more skill, and set better. Affections, the quickness of them depends much upon bodily spirits.

2. Our bringing forth more fruit, it is not to be measured simply by our success towards others in the exercise of those gifts, though that be called fruit also; so, Jer. xvii. 10, they are called 'the fruit of our doings.' There are our doings, and the fruits of our doings,—that is, the success which our examples, or gifts, or graces, have upon others,—and so the conversion of the souls of men by the apostles is called by Christ 'their fruit,' John xv. 16; yet simply by this we are not to reckon our growth, for in success and exercise of gifts a man may decrease when he grows older, and so see less fruit of his labours than formerly, or haply he may be laid aside. So says the Baptist of himself, 'I must decrease,' John iii. 30. John, when Christ came to preach, had less comings in. And in this respect, old Christians and ancient ministers may decrease, and young ones increase, and yet they decay not in grace; for there are God's works in us, and God's works with us. Now, God's work with us in doing good to others may be less when yet his works in us may be more; for as there are 'diversities of gifts,' so of 'operations,' 1 Cor. xii. 4, 6. The Holy Ghost may use one of less grace to do more good than one of more: though herein this caution is to be added, that he delights usually to honour those of most sincerity with most success; as in that eminent apostle, Paul, 'the grace of God was more in him,' and so wrought more with him in doing much good to others, 1 Cor. xv. 10; and God also will reward 'according to the fruit of our doings,' as Jer. xvii. 10, when our desires are enlarged to do much good, and we intended and aimed to do that good which is done; there it is added there, in that Jer. xvii., 'whose heart thou knowest.' When he sees the heart clearly enlarged to do much good, then the fruit that is done is reckoned him as his; otherwise, whatever it be he doth by us, he will reward but according to our works, as concurrent with his. So, 1 Cor. iii. 8, the Apostle upon this oc-

casion intimates that seeing it is 'God that gives the increase,' he says that 'God will reward men according to their own labours;' not simply according to his works by them. As if God doth not go forth with a minister whose heart is much set to do good and to convert souls, to do so much good by him as with another, who is in his own spirit less zealous; yet if his heart was large in desires, and his endeavours great to do good, God will reckon more fruit to him than to another that had fewer endeavours, though more success.

3. This growth in grace, and bringing forth more fruit, is not simply to be reckoned by the largeness or smallness of those opportunities which men have of doing more or less good, and so, by the bringing forth of more fruit, in respect of more opportunities vouchsafed. Some that have more grace, and better gifts, have their shop-windows shut, night overtakes them, and the power of darkness, as it did Christ himself in the end, and then 'they cannot work.' Others have lesser shops to work in, and yet have more grace; yea, the same man may have larger opportunities when young and lesser when he is old, and yet grows and brings forth before God more fruit, because he accepts the will for the deed. So the Baptist was hindered in his latter time in prison, when yet he brought forth more fruit; and therefore he envied not Christ that got all his custom, his hearers, and disciples, but rejoiced that the work went forward, though not by himself. Here was as much grace expressed as in many sermons. So Paul, he was much of his time in prison, yet then he ceased not to bring forth more fruit that should tend to his salvation; for, Phil. i. 15, 16, whenas he being in prison, he heard others preached, and that out of envy to him, others out of good-will, I in prison rejoiced, says he, 'that Christ is preached,' though I cannot do it myself; and I know, says he, 'that this shall turn to my salvation,' ver. 19. These fruits were as much, and would bring him in as much glory as his preaching. Indeed, when a man shall prize opportunities of doing good, and for them voluntarily let go all opportunities of advancing himself and his credit, or ease, or carnal advantages, then the more fruit he brings forth in those opportunities, the more is reckoned on his score.

4. It is not always to be measured by accessory graces, as joy and spiritual ravishment, &c., which tend to the *bene esse*, the comfort of a Christian; but it is to be estimated rather by those substantial graces, as faith, humility, love, strong and solid affections to what is good. The other may decrease when these that are more substantial do increase. These sweet blooms may fall off when fruit comes on; though the gloss wear out, no matter, so the stuff be strong and substantial. Young Christians grow like new instruments; they have more varnish than old, but not so sweet a sound. Yea, often the decreasing of those superadded graces are a means of the increase of the other. Want of feeling causeth more exercise of faith, as taking away bladders exercises a man to swim. One that hath bladders, and the stream with him, seems to swim as well and as fast as one that hath learned long, and hath more skill and strength, but wanteth these, and swims against the stream, yet not so fast. Spiritual withdrawings cause more humility, more cleaving to God. A man, as the leper cleansed, haply at the first leaps more, but goes as fast afterward.

5. It is not increasing in outward professing, and a seeming forward, but especially in inward and substantial godliness; the other is but as increasing in leaves; but in growth there must be a bringing forth more fruit. When the root strikes not deeper downward and further into the earth, but spreads much upward in the branches, this is not a true growth; though look where

there is more rooting, there will be more spreading also above ground. Growth, it lies not in this, 'that men should think of me above what I am indeed,' 2 Cor. xii. 6. Many at first grow into so great a profession as they cannot fill up and grow up to all their days: make bigger clothes than they can grow to fill; as they say of elephants, that the skin is as big at first as ever after, and all their lifetime their flesh grows but up to fill their skin up. True growth begins at the vitals; the heart, the liver, the blood gets soundness and vigour, and so the whole man outwardly; this heart-godliness is the thing you must judge by.

6. And yet, even in inward affections many be deceived; even there the party for Christ in appearance may be greater than in truth. So, often in a young Christian, there is a greater army of affections mustered, but most of them but mercenaries: his affections are then larger, his joys greater, his sorrows violenter than afterwards. More of his heart joins in duties at first; but afterwards, though less, yet more spiritually and truly. The objects being then new, draw all after them: not only spirit, or that new principle of grace is stirred then, but flesh also. The unregenerate part becomes a temporary believer for a time, hath a work upon it *per redundantiam*, as an unregenerate man hath who is a temporary; which work on the unregenerate part doth decay, as in temporaries it doth, and grows less. Not only godly sorrow is stirred to mourn for sin, but carnal sorrow, being awakened by God's wrath, joins also, and so makes the stream bigger. Infidelity itself, like Simon Magus, for a while believes. Whilst the things of grace are a wonder to a man, as at first they are, presumption joins and ekes out faith. A great party in the heart 'cleaves by flattery,' as the phrase is in Daniel, and for by-ends, which, after some progress, fall off and faint in the way; and those lusts that, over and above their true mortification, were further cast into a swoon, begin again to revive.

All this was resembled to us by the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt, when, by those plagues in Egypt, and Moses's call, not only the Israelites, but even many of the Egyptians were wrought upon, and began out of self-love to fear the Lord, Exod. ix. 20, and so 'a mixed multitude,' it is said, went out with the Israelites, Exod. xii. 38, to sacrifice to the Lord; but ere long, as Num. xi. 4, this mixed multitude began to murmur, and to fall off. So, at a man's first setting out at his first conversion, mixed carnal affections, the unregenerate part, through the newness of the objects, and impression of God's wrath, and heavenly ravishments, are wrought upon, and go out with the new Israel to sacrifice, but after a while these fall away, and then the number is less; but the true Israelites may be increased. Hence it is that young Christians, if they know their hearts, complain more of hypocrisy, and old Christians of deadness. So, in times of peace, presumption ekes out faith, and makes it seem a great deal, which in times of desertion and trial falls off; and then, though the believing party be less, yet more sincere. When the fire is first kindled, there is more smoke, even as much as fills the house; but after the flame comes, that contracts all into a narrow compass, and hath more heat in it. So it is in young Christians, their affections, which Christ compares to the smoking flax, their joy in duties, their sorrow for sin, their love of God, is more, but exceeding carnal; the flame after, though less, grows purer, and less mixed with vapours of corrupt self-love.

7. We must not measure our bringing forth more fruit by some one kind or sort of duties, but by our growth in godliness, in the universal extent and latitude of it, as it takes in and comprehendeth the duties of both callings,

general and particular, and all the duties of a Christian. Thus it may be when grown up we are less in some sort of duties than we were when we were young Christians. Haply we were more then in praying, in fasting, and reading and meditating; yea, spent the most, if not the whole, of our time in these. But because now we spend less time in these, we must not say therefore that we are fallen or decayed; for there are many other duties to be done besides these, which haply then we neglected, but now make conscience of. So that take all sorts of duties in the latitude of them, and we may be grown more, and do bring forth more fruit. Perhaps we bring forth less fruit of some one kind than afore, but if we be filled with all variety of fruits of the first and second table of our general and particular callings, this is to bring forth more fruit.

Men at their first conversion are necessitated often for to spend their whole time in such duties wherein they immediately draw nigh to God. Paul then spent three whole days in fasting and prayer. And then we allow them to do it, because their estates require it; they want assurance and establishment, they see grace to be that one thing necessary, and therefore we give them leave to neglect all things for it; they are new married to Christ, and therefore they are not to be pressed to war the first year, (as I may so allude,) as for young married persons it was provided in Leviticus; and parents and masters are to give allowance to such, then in their travail of their new birth, to lie in, and not to be cruel to them, in denying them more time than ordinary.

So also when they are in desertion,—which is a time of sickness, and in sickness you allow your servants time from their work,—as the church when she wanted her beloved, Cant. iii. 2, no wonder if she leaves all to seek him. As yourselves, when you want a child or a servant, you cry him in every street, and leave all to find him, as he left ninety-nine to find one lost sheep. And they then come new out of prison, out of their natural estate, and out of the fresh apprehension of the wrath of God, and therefore no wonder if they run so fast to haste out of it, and salute none by the way, stay to do no business; but when once they are gotten to the city of refuge, then they fall about their business and callings again. Hence young Christians are apt to be more negligent in their particular callings, and are all for the duties of religion, for their present distress and estate requires it. Ancienter Christians are apt to abound more in the duties of their particular calling. But he that hath learned to be conversant in both aright, to be conversant in his calling, so as to keep his heart up in communion with God, and so attend upon God without distraction, and to be conversant so in duties as to go about his calling cheerfully, and to 'do with all his might what his hand therein finds to do,' he is the best Christian. And therefore, 1 Thess. iv. 10, when he had exhorted them to increase more and more in grace, he goes on, ver. 11, to exhort them also 'to do their own business, and to work with their hands,' that they may 'walk honestly towards them without;' for to neglect our callings gives offence to them without, and therefore masters stumble at young Christians. But both, you see by the Apostle's exhortation in that epistle, may stand together, increasing in holiness, of which he had spoken before, chap. iii. 12, and chap. iv. 1, 10, with diligence in a calling, of which he speaks, ver. 11, &c. To be conversant all day in holy duties is indeed more sweet to a man's self, and is a heaven upon earth; but to be conversant in our callings is more 'profitable to others,' and so may glorify God more. And therefore, as when Paul would gladly *have* been with Christ,—for 'that is best for me,' says he,—yet, says he, 'to

abide here is more profitable for you,' Phil. i. 24. So, to enjoy immediate communion with God in prayer, and to meditate all the week long, is more for the comfort of a man's particular; but to be employed in the business of a man's calling, the more profitable for the church, or commonwealth, or family. And therefore it is to be accounted a bringing forth of more fruit, when both are joined and wisely subordinated, so as the one is not a hindrance to the other. Though the child, out of love to his mother, and the sweetness he hath in her company, could find it in his heart to stay all day at home to look on her, yet it pleaseth her more for him to go to school all day, and at night to come home and be with her, and play with her; and she then kisseth him, and makes much of him. Children when they are young, they eat often, and do little, and we allow them to do so; afterwards you set them to work, and to school, and reduce them to two good meals, and they thrive as well with it.

CHAPTER IV.

What it is to bring forth more fruit explicated positively; wherein many direct trials of growth are given.

II. THUS I have shewn you negatively what this growth is not to be measured by, and so by way of intimation wherein it consists; I will, secondly, do it more positively, and directly, and affirmatively.

1. We grow when we are led on to exercise new graces, and so to 'add one grace to another,' as the apostle Peter exhorts; as when in our knowledge we are led into new truths, and have answerable affections running along with those discoveries towards the things revealed. At first a Christian doth not exercise all graces, though all are radically in him. But as a man lives first the life of a plant, then of sense, then of reason, so is it in graces. There are many forms Christians go through, as scholars at school do, wherein their thoughts are in a more especial manner taken up about divine objects of a higher or inferior nature. The first form is to teach them to know their sinfulness of heart and life more; and so they go to school to the law, and are set to study it, even oftentimes a good while after conversion and faith begun. And then, after they have learned that lesson throughly, they are led up higher to have their faith drawn out, and to be exercised about free grace more, and towards Christ's person, union with him, and about the art and way of drawing virtue from him, and doing all in him. And herein it falls out with particular Christians as with the church in general; that as although the most infant days of the church, from Adam's time in the old world, had the knowledge of all fundamentals necessary to salvation, yet God went over πολυμερῶς, piecemeal, Heb. i. 1, age after age, to instruct his church in a larger knowledge of those fundamentals: so is it in God's dealing with particular Christians. Though a believer in his conversion hath the substance of all these taught him, yet he goes over them by piecemeal again throughout his whole life; and hath often such a distinct apprehension renewed of them, as if he had not known or minded them before. And sometimes his thoughts do dwell more about the emptiness of his own righteousness, sometimes about that fulness is in Christ, sometimes more about the spiritual strictness he ought to walk in. And because some are apt to give up the old work when they have new, hence that which is indeed but growth in grace in them many account to be but their first conversion; though every such eminent addition be to be accounted as a conversion, as Christ speaks to his disciples, 'Except ye be converted;' yet they were converted before. Now, the purpose I speak this for is a help to discern our growth; for when God thus is leading us with further light and affection to a larger apprehension of spiritual things, or to the trying new graces, so long we grow. Therefore, Cant. vii. 13, the church is said to 'lay up for her beloved fruits new and old;' and, Rom. v., from patience a man is led to experience, and from experience to hope As wicked men are led on from

one sin to another, and so grow worse and worse; so godly men from one grace to another: and when it is so with us, then we increase.

2. When a man finds new degrees of the same grace added, and the fruits of them grow bigger and more plentiful: as when a man's love grows 'more fervent,' as 1 Pet. iv. 8; when faith, from merely casting itself on Christ, comes to find sweetness in Christ, which is to 'eat his flesh and drink his blood;' and then from that grows further up to an 'assurance of faith,' which is an addition to it; when anything that 'was lacking in faith,' as the apostle speaks, 1 Thess. iii. 10, is added. So when a man grows up to more strength of faith in temptations, and is less moved and shaken in them, more rooted in faith, as the apostle speaks. Thus in godly sorrow, when from mourning for sin as contrary to God's holiness, we go on to mourn for it as contrary to him who loves us, which follows upon assurance, as they 'mourned over him which once they had pierced:' not only that we mourn that we should offend a God hath so much mercy in him, but out of a sense of it to us, which many cannot find. So when our motives to hate sin grow more raised, more spiritual, these are additions of the same degree. So in prayer, when we find our prayers to grow more spiritual, as in that part of prayer, confession, when more spiritual corruptions are put into our confessions; and so, in like manner, stronger grounds of faith put into deprecation and petitions for pardon; more enlargedness to thankfulness; more zeal to pray for the churches; when we go on to 'pray with all prayer more,' as the Apostle speaks, Eph. vi. 18. Or in obedience, when we 'abound more and more in the work of the Lord,' as, Rev. ii. 19, it is said of that church, that 'their last works were more than the first;' so as the boughs are laden, and we are 'filled with the fruits of righteousness,' Phil. i. 11.

3. When the fruits and duties we perform grow more ripe, more spiritual, though less juicy, that is, less affectionate; and though they grow not in bigness nor in number,—that is, we pray not more nor longer,—yet they grow more savoury, more spiritual, more compact and solid. It is not simply the multitude of performances argues growth; when one is sick, and his body is decayed, he may be less in duties; but it is the spiritualness, the holiness of them. One short prayer put up in faith, with a broken heart, is in God's eye more fruit than a long one, or a whole day spent in fasting; even in the same sense that the 'widow's mite' is said to be 'more than they all' cast in, Luke xxi. 3. Young Christians perform more duties at first, and oftener, than after; as young stomachs eat more and oftener. As in noting sermons, so in performing duties, some will note more words but not more matter, because with less understanding. Young Christians perform more duties, and withal spoil more duties; young carpenters make many chips. But the more spiritual your performances grow, the more fruit there is to be esteemed that there is in them. It is not the bigness of the fruit, or juiciness of them, for then crabs were better than apples, but the relish it is that gives the commendation. And it is the end you have therein that puts this relish into them: when your ends are raised more to aim at God, and to sanctify him more, and to debase yourselves in a sense of your own vileness, and emptiness, and inability; and when your obedience proceeds more out of thankfulness, and less out of the constraint of conscience. As the greatest growth of wicked men is in spiritual wickedness,—in which the Pharisees grew, and sinners against the Holy Ghost do grow, when yet it may be they leave more gross evils,—so the greatest growth of grace is in spiritual holiness, in sanctifying God much in the heart, and 'worshipping him in spirit and truth.'

4. When a man grows more rooted into Christ, that is the true growth, and that which makes the fruit to be more in God's sight and esteem; therefore, Eph. iv. 15, we are said 'to grow up in him,'—that is, to live the life we lead more out of ourselves and in Christ. As when, for the acceptation of our persons, we are emptied of our own righteousness; so for strength to perform duties, we are emptied of our abilities, seeing 'without him we can do nothing.' So when for acceptation of our performances when we have done them, our hearts have learned habitually to say more and more with the apostle, 'Not I, but Christ in me;' when we interest Christ more and more in all we do, as the efficient and also the final cause. And therefore I observe, when growth of grace is mentioned, it is still expressed by 'growing in the knowledge of Christ;' so, 2 Pet. iii. 18, 'Grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ;' as if to grow in grace without him were nothing, as indeed it is not. So in the Ephesians we are said both to grow up in him and for him. Philosophers did grow in moral virtues, but not in Christ; so do civil men and others. Temporaries do duties from him, but yet as in themselves; as the ivy that hath sap from the oak, but concocts it in its own root, and so brings forth as from itself. To do one duty, sanctifying Christ and free grace in the heart, is more than a thousand. Young Christians, it may be, do more works, but not as works of grace: and the more men think by duties to get Christ and God's favour, the more in duties they trust, and so they become as works of the law; but the more dead a man grows to the law, and to live to Christ and Christ in him, and the more free grace is acknowledged in all, trusted in above all, the more evangelical our works are, and the more to God, (for that is the end of the gospel, to honour Christ and free grace,) the more we grow. 'We are of the circumcision,' says the Apostle, 'who rejoice in the Lord Jesus, worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh,' Phil. iii. 3. As these are the surest signs of true grace, so of true growth.

5. The more we learn to bring forth fruits in season, the more fruit we may be said to bring forth. For the seasonable performance of them makes them more. All the fruits in their season, how acceptable are they! which out of season they are not. In the 1st Psalm a righteous man is said to 'bring forth his fruits in due season;' and in the Proverbs, 'Words in season are as apples of gold and pictures of silver.' In Ezek. xlvii. 12, they are said to 'bring forth pleasant fruits in their months.' As in reproving he is not so much to reprove, as to reprove in season; to have our 'senses exercised' to know fit seasons, and to 'consider one another to provoke to love,' as it is Heb. x. 24. Young Christians do more, but more out of season, and the devil abuseth them, putting them upon duties, when they would be at their refreshings, at their callings; he deceiving them with this, that holy duties in themselves, as alone simply compared, are better than to do anything else; whenas the season adds the goodness to our actions. Thus to recreate thyself at some seasons is better than to be a-praying. A 'righteous man orders his conversation aright,' Ps. l. 23, and order gives a rectitude, a goodness to things.

6. When we grow more constant in performances, and more even in a godly course, and settled in spiritual affections without intermission, it is a sign we grow. It argues that 'our inward man is more renewed day by day,' when we can walk closely with God a long while together. A righteous man is compared to the palm-tree, 'whose leaf never fades,' Ps. i.; whereas other trees bring forth by fits. And by fits to be much in duties is not a sign of growth, but weakness; it is out of inordinacy. And of such

a frame are young Christians' hearts, like new lute-strings, which, when they are wound too high, are still a-falling ever and anon; whereas strings settled long on an instrument will stand long, and not slip down.

7. A man may be said to grow and bring forth more fruit, when, although the difficulties of doing duties become greater, and his means less, yet he continues to do them, and this though it may be he doth no more than he did before. For a tree to bring forth much fruit in cold weather, or standing in the shade, is more than in summer, or when it stands in the sun. 'I know thy work, thy labour, *and thy patience*,' Rev. ii. 19. When a man, though he do fewer works, yet with much labour, having it may be now a body grown weak; or holds out in the profession of the ways of God, with more scoffs, and hazarding more, in a place where 'Satan's throne is;' this makes a little done for Christ a great deal. So when a man thrives with a little trading, with small means of grace, and yet exceedeth those that have more; to pray, and to continue to do so, though the stream is against us, and gales cease; to pray, and to continue to pray, when we hear no answers, but the contrary. It is noted of Daniel, that 'he did the king's business after he had been sick,' chap. viii. 27; and so he prayed, you know, when he ventured his life for it. When we have less straw to make the same number of brick with, less wages, less encouragements, and yet do as much work with cheerfulness.

8. When a man, though he doth less for the outward bulk, yet grows more wise and faithful to lay out all his opportunities and abilities to the best advantage; this is to bring forth more fruit. Thus Moses, who at first began to hear himself all causes both small and great, but in the end he gave over the lesser causes to others, and reserved the hearing of the greater to himself, Exod. xviii. 13–26, yet still he continued to do more, and laid himself out to the greater advantage. His former course would in the end have killed him; 'Thou wilt wear away like a leaf,' saith Jethro to him. So the Apostle, who strived to preach the gospel 'where Christ had not been known,' Rom. xv. 20. When a man forbears lesser things to lay out all for the church's advantage; less ventures himself in a smaller course, (unless particularly called to it,) not out of fearfulness but faithfulness, and will lay all the stock on it in a greater. Young Christians are as young fencers, they strike hand over head, downright blows; whereas if they would consider their brother, or a wicked man whom they would reprove, as skilful fencers do, and at an advantage hit them a good blow, is it not much better? When a man 'watcheth in all things,' as he exhorts Timothy, 2 Tim. iv. 5, and 'serves the season,' as some read it, Rom. xii. 11,—that is, waits for the best advantages of doing good, both which may stand with fervency of spirit, and enduring afflictions, for so the next words are in both those places. A man is no less liberal that studies how to lay out his money to most charitable uses, though he gives less to fewer particulars. We live in a wicked world, and godly men cannot do what they would, as wicked men also cannot. When therefore a man looks about him, and studies to improve himself to the utmost advantage for God in his place, to lay out his credit, his parts, and all for God, as a faithful factor in the best wares, though he deals in fewer particulars, he may notwithstanding bring forth more fruit.—And thus much for matter of trial about the first thing, positive growth in fruitfulness.

PART II.

OF GROWTH IN *MORTIFICATION:* OR, GOD'S PURGING OUT CORRUPTION.

He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.—JOHN XV. 2.

CHAPTER I.

The observation out of the text propounded, That God goes on to purge corruption out of true branches.—Bounds set to this discourse about it, according to the scope of the text.—The reasons of the point.

I COME now to the trial of our growth in that other part of sanctification,—namely, the mortification of lusts, and purging out of corruptions,—which the text also calls for; Christ here saying not only that they bring forth more fruit, but that God 'purgeth them' that they may bring forth more fruit.

The observation from which words is clearly this, *That God chooseth true branches to grow, in a purging out of their corruptions, as in true fruitfulness.*

In the handling of this point, I shall do these four things:—

I. First, Set the bounds and limits of this discourse about it, according to Christ's intendment, as here he speaks of it.

II. Secondly, Give some reasons of the point.

III. Thirdly, Shew the ways which God useth to carry on the progress in this work.

IV. Fourthly, Give some helps of trial about it.

I. Now for the first, the explication and limiting this point unto Christ's intendment here, that so I may only so far handle it as the scope of the words will bear, I premise these three things about it:—

1. That purging here intended, which is indeed all one with mortification, and emptying out sin out of our hearts and lives, is to be restrained here to the progress of a Christian in that work, and not as taking in with it that first work of mortification wrought at a man's first conversion; so as I intend not now to lay open to you the nature of mortification, and what it is, by way of commonplace, but only intend to speak of growth in it: for of that Christ speaks, because it is such a purging as is after bringing forth some fruit, and whereof the end is to bring forth more fruit. Neither—

2. Are we so much to speak of it here as it is a duty to be done by us, though it be so, but as it is a work of God upon us, which he takes care to go through with and perfect in all those who are fruitful; for he speaks here of it rather as an act of God's—'he purgeth'—than as it is to be an act of ours, that we ought to purge ourselves; though both do go together, as

in that speech, Rom. viii. 13, 'We by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh;' so as that which is proper to the point in hand, for the explication of it, as here in this place it is laid down, is not so much to give you motives or means of purging yourselves, as to shew you the ways and courses God takes still one way or other to purge his children by, that they may be more fruitful. And yet—

3. In this work of mortification, considered thus in the progress of it, we are not mere passives,—as at that final perfecting and finishing of it, and carrying away all sin at death we are, and are at that first habitual beginning of it, at conversion,—but therein we are 'workers together with God:' we being purged from sin as the body is by physic from humours; though the physic work, yet nature joins with the physic, being quickened and helped by it to cast out the humours; for give a dead man physic, and it carries not any humours away. So as those means whereby God purgeth us are not to be imagined to do it as mere physical agents, like as the pruning-hook cuts off branches from a tree, or as when a surgeon cuts out dead flesh; but these means do it by stirring up our graces, and quickening them, and by setting our thoughts, and faith, and affections a-work, and so God assisting with the power of Christ's death, he doth purge us daily, by making his word, afflictions, and the like, to set our thoughts a-work against sin, and so to cast it forth. It is certain, that unless our thoughts work upon the means, as well as the means work upon us, and so do mingle themselves with those means; that unless faith and Christ's death be mingled in the heart, it purgeth not. And therefore it is said as well that 'we purge ourselves,'—so 2 Tim. ii. 21, and also 1 John iii. 3, and Rom. viii., that 'we by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh,'—as it is said that 'God purgeth us,' which is the thing affirmed here, because God still, in going on to purge us, doth it by stirring up our graces, and useth therein acts of our faith, and love, and many motives and considerations, to stir up our graces so to effect it. Now—

II. For the reasons that move God thus to go on to purge corruptions out of his children:—

1. Because Jesus Christ hath purchased an eternal divorce between corruption and our hearts. He hath bought off all our corruptions, and redeemed us from all iniquity. Titus ii. 14, 'He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people;' and God will have the price of Christ's blood out.

2. Because God desires more and more to have delight in us, and to draw nigh to us, and therefore he more and more goes on to purge us. For though he loves us at first, when full of corruptions, yet he cannot so much delight in us as he would, nor have that communion with us, no more than a husband can with a wife who hath an unsavoury breath or a loathsome disease. They must therefore be purified for his bed, as Esther was for Ahasuerus. 'Draw nigh to God,' says James, 'and he will draw nigh to you,' chap. iv. 8, 9; but then you must 'cleanse your hands, and purify your hearts,' as it follows there; God else hath no delight to draw nigh to you.

3. He daily purgeth his that they may be fit for use and service; for unless he purged them, he could not use them in honourable employments, such as to suffer or to stand for him, in what concerns his glory; they would be unfit for such uses, as a vessel is that is unscoured. Therefore, 2 Tim. ii. 21, 'If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour,'—that is, he shall be used in honourable employments, and not laid aside,—and he shall be 'meet for his master's use,' as vessels kept clean, when on the sudden the master hath occasion to use them, and to have them served in.

4. That as our persons, so that our services may be more and more acceptable; that our prayers and such performances may savour less of gifts, and pride, and self-love, and carnal desires: so, Mal. iii. 3, 4, it is said, 'He shall sit as a purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, as gold is purified, from their dross, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness: and then shall their offerings be pleasant to the Lord.' The more the heart and life is purged, the more acceptable your prayers are, and your obedience, and all you do.

CHAPTER II.

The ways God useth to purge out our corruptions; and means whereby he causeth us to grow therein.

III. Now, in the third place, for the ways whereby God goes on to purge us, there are many and diverse; he blesseth all sorts of means and dealings of his to accomplish it.

1. First, he useth occasional means to do it, and blesseth them; as—

(1.) Even falling into sins. Thus it was with David when he fell; thereby God set him anew upon this work, as by his prayer appears, Ps. li., 'Oh, purge me, make me clean.'

(2.) Secondly, by casting them into afflictions. So, Dan. xi. 35, 'They shall fall, to purge them and make them white.' What the word doth not purge out, nor mercies, that afflictions must. These vines must be cut till they bleed. Summer purgeth out the outward humours that lie in the skin by sweating, but winter concocteth the inward by driving in the heat, and so purgeth away the humours that lie in the inward parts; and so, what by the one, what by the other, the body is kept in health. Thus mercies prevail against some sins, and afflictions against others. Moses neglected to circumcise his child, (as we do our hearts, it is such a bloody work,) till God met him, and would have killed him. And in like manner God sometimes puts us in the fear or danger of losing our lives, casts us into sicknesses, and the like, making as if he meant to kill us, and all to bring us off to this work of purging, to circumcise our hearts.

2. As these occasional, so also instrumental instituted helps, as his word. So, Eph. v. 26, Christ is said 'to cleanse his church with the washing of water by the word;' by the word *spoken*, either in preaching or in conference. So in the very next words to my text, 'Now ye are clean through the words I have spoken unto you;' they had then received the sacraments, and had heard a good sermon. The word at once discovers the sin, and sets the heart against it: 'I was ignorant, till I went into the sanctuary.' There goes a light with it to see sin after another manner, although a man did know it before, and then the word sets out the vileness of a sin; and to hear a sin declaimed against and reproved sets an exasperation upon the mind against it, and so a man goes home, and sets upon it to kill it and destroy it. Or else by the word *meditated* upon, as by keeping some truth or other fresh and sweet in the mind, which the mind cheweth on. God fastens the mind upon some new promise, or new discovered sign of a man's estate, and these 'cleanse' him, 2 Cor. vii. 1; or upon some attribute of his, and that quickens the inward man, and overcomes the outward. Some consideration or other every day God doth make familiar to a man's spirit, to 'talk with him,' (as the phrase is, Prov. vi. 22,) and to keep him company, and usually some new one; God leading us through varieties of sweet truths to chew upon, one this day, and another to-morrow. And these have an exceeding purging virtue

in them; they keep the purging issue open, even as those that have issues made in their arms or legs use to have a pea, or some such small thing, to lie in the orifice of the issue to keep it open; and so doth such a new truth, with spiritual light discovered, still keep the purging issue of sin open, and draws out the filth, and 'keeps the heart.' So says Solomon, Prov. vi. 21, 22, 24: observe the coherence there, and it is as if he had said, Keep this command fresh in mind, and it shall keep thee.

3. God useth also the examples of others as means to provoke a man to purge himself.

(1.) Examples of those that have been professors, and fallen away. They provoke a man to set fresh upon this work, lest that the like sins should prevail against him also, and cause him to fall. Therefore the Apostle, when he heard of Hymenæus and Philetus's fall, 2 Tim. ii. 19, 'Let every one,' says he, 'that calls upon the name of the Lord,' make this use of it, to 'depart from iniquity.' And it follows, 'If you purge yourselves from these, ye shall be vessels of honour.' It follows upon that occasion.

(2.) Examples of holy men. To hear very holy men speak what victory over lusts may be attained here doth much provoke another to purge himself, who else would content himself with a lesser degree; so Phil. iii. 17.

4. In the last place, there are many inward workings upon the heart, whereby God goes on still to purge us.

(1.) First, by a further discovering of corruptions unto us; either a greater filthiness in the evils we saw before, or to see more of them, and by what one sees to suspect more. God never discovers lusts to his but to carry them away; he stirs the humours to purge them. Thus when David saw his sin, he sets anew upon cleansing himself. In the 19th Psalm, coming new from taking a view of his heart, and having seen such volumes of corruptions, so many *errata* in all that he did, he cries out, 'Who can understand his errors?' and withal, 'Oh, cleanse me from secret sins.' He then saw secret evils, and suspected more than as yet he saw; and this made him cry out, 'Oh, cleanse me,' and so to use all means, and to go to God to cleanse him. So when, in the 51st Psalm, God let down a light to let him but see the corruption of his nature afresh, that he was 'born in sin,' and had 'no truth' there, more falsehood than he could ever have imagined, 'Oh, purge me,' says he upon it.

(2.) Secondly, he sets the heart on work to make it a business to get one's lusts mortified more and more, and not to rest in the measure attained. Phil. iii. 13, Paul 'forgot what was behind;' he did still desire to have more fellowship with Christ in his death and sufferings, in the death of sin. When a man's heart is set upon the work, as that τὸ ἔργον he came into the world for, as David, who took up a resolution, 'I said I would look to my ways;' so when a man hath said unto himself, I will grow in grace, as they say, 'I will be rich,' 1 Tim. vi. 9, and so looks at it as his business, being as much convinced of this, that he should be more holy, as he was at first that he was to be new born; when growth of grace is as much in a man's eye as getting grace at first was, and as great a necessity made of the one as of the other. This conviction many want, and so take no care to grow more holy and more pure. Phil. iii. 15, 'If any be otherwise minded, says the Apostle, that there is no such absolute necessity of going on still to perfection, 'God shall reveal it to him.' God doth reveal and set on this upon every godly man's heart at one time or another, and so goes on to purge them. And this is also expressed to us, 1 Peter iv. 1, 'Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, let us arm ourselves with the same

mind,' namely, to mortify our lusts; for it follows, 'He that hath suffered in the flesh,' that is, hath mortified his lusts, 'hath ceased from sin.' That same 'arming' there is God's putting into the mind a strong and invincible resolution to go through with this work; when he arms and steels it against all difficulties, all encounters. This is meant by 'arming us with the same mind:' that as Christ looked upon it as his business why he came into the world, even to suffer for us; so for us to look upon it as our business to crucify our lusts. When therefore we intend all our endeavours upon this work, and mind nothing in comparison, pray for nothing more, receive sacraments for this purpose, and hear and perform all other duties with an eye to this, prosecute this business as the main; when God hath put such a resolution into a man, and preserves it, then he goes on to purge him.

(3.) Thirdly, God doth it by drawing the sap and juice of the affections of the heart more and more into holy duties and into obedience. When that intention of mind, as our morning thoughts and the like, which we formerly spent upon vanities, are now drawn into prayer and holy meditations, then lusts do wither; and when our care is how to please God more, and our hearts are more in the duties of obedience, then doth corruption shale off more and more; and thus by diverting our intentions doth God work out corruptions. And look, as the sun doth draw up the sap out of the root, so doth Christ draw out the heart at some times more than at others to holy duties, and unto communion with himself in the duties. This killeth sin, and causeth it to wither,—namely, by taking away the sap, that is, that intention of mind which doth usually nourish it. Thus, 1 Pet. i. 22, 'We purify our hearts by obeying the truth.'

(4.) Fourthly, by bringing the heart more and more acquainted with Christ, his Son, which is the Father's work to do, for 'none comes to the Son but whom the Father draws.' Now, how many souls are there who have gone puddering on, as I may so speak, in the use of other means, and though in the use thereof Christ hath communicated some virtue to them, yet because they did not trade with him chiefly in those duties, they have had little in comparison to what afterwards they have had when he hath been discovered to them, as that great ordinance who is appointed by God to get their lusts mortified. Before this they have washed and washed, but they have washed without soap, until Christ hath been thus revealed to them, and the virtue of his death and rising again, which is compared, Mal. iii. 2, unto 'fuller's soap,' &c. In Zech. xiii. 1, it is said that 'God opens a fountain to the house of David, for sin and for uncleanness,' that is, for the guilt of sin and the power of sin. Now by that opening is not meant the promise of sending his Son into the world to be crucified, but the discovery of him to believers after his being crucified: for, chap. xii. 10, he is supposed to be crucified already, for they there 'see him whom they have pierced;' therefore by that opening there is meant the discovery of him to his people, and him to be the great ordinance of cleansing them. Now, the more distinctly a man understands Christ, and how to make use of him, who is already made sanctification to us, the more easily he gets his lusts purged. Such a one, that trades immediately with Christ, will do more in a day than another in a year; for, seeing that the power of purging us lies immediately in him, and that he is the purging drug which mingles itself with the word and all means else, and sets them all a-work, therefore the more of him we have, and the more immediate application we have of him to us, and of his power, the more recourse our hearts have to him, the more our lusts are purged. As it is in drugs or minerals, if the infusion and steeping of them in liquors will work,

how much more if the substance of them be taken down inwardly and immediately? Now this comes to pass, as God doth go on to open our faith to see him, and know him, and to be acquainted with him; for so the Apostle expresseth it, Phil. iii., 'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.' The more we look upon all means else in the use of them as ineffectual without him, the more power we shall find from him.

(5.) Fifthly, by assuring the soul of his love, and shedding it abroad in the heart, and by working spiritual joy in the heart, doth God also purge his people. And to work all these is in God's power immediately and solely. 'I am crucified with Christ,' Gal. ii. 20. And how? By believing that 'Christ gave himself for me, and loved me.' This deadens a man to the world, makes a man crucify that which Christ was crucified for; and this makes a man hate sin, the more he loves Christ, or apprehends his love. And it doth this in a double relation or respect, not only because sin so displeaseth him, nor only as it is contrary to his will, but because it did afflict him so much once, and because to 'take sin away' was the intent he came into the world. For so (1 John iii. 4) although a believer is said to mortify sin upon this consideration indeed, that it is 'the transgression of the law,' yet much more upon this other, because 'Christ was manifest to take sin away.' And the more assurance I have of another life and a better, and of being like Christ hereafter, the more a man purgeth himself to be fit for that condition. 'He that hath this hope in him purgeth himself, as he is pure;' so in 1 John iii. 2. The more joy a man hath in Christ, the more deadened he must needs be to the world; the one eats up the other: for the ground of all sin is but the love of pleasure. Now, if I find it in God and Christ, it deadens me for seeking it in the world; for *omnis vita gustu ducitur*, all life is maintained by a taste of some sweetness. Now, when the sweetness of sin, the relish of it, is spoiled by the taste of a greater, it must needs die and abate. And though that sweetness from God doth not always remain in the present taste and relish of it, yet it leaves such an impression behind it, that whatever a man tastes after, it hath no relish with him in comparison; still he says 'the old is better:' and though the taste of one sinful pleasure may take us off from another, yet none but a contrary pleasure doth kill the sin and the pleasure in it.

CHAPTER III.

The trial of mortification; and that first by negative signs, or such as argue much corruption yet remaining unpurged out.

IV. I WILL now come to that fourth thing which was propounded, namely, helps whereby you may discern what progress hath been made in this work. And as I said at first that my purpose was not so much to handle mortification in the commonplace of it, as only growth therein; so those things I shall now deliver about discerning the measure of it, I intend them not so much for signs of mortification, as rules whereby we may judge how the work goes forward in us, and how far we are still short in it.

1. And, first, I will handle it negatively, and give you such symptoms as argue much corruption, a great deal of humours yet remaining to be purged out; such as argue little proficiency in this work, though such as withal true grace may be supposed to be in the heart.

(1.) When a man doth magnify and sets a high price upon worldly and carnal excellencies and pleasures; is much taken with outward things, and carried away with them; or when, though we restrain ourselves from the eager pursuit after them, yet if in our eyes and opinions they seem glorious and goodly things, and, oh, we secretly think, the enjoying such a pleasure, the obtaining such an excellency, or such or such a condition of life, accommodated with such and such conveniences and circumstances, would be so great an addition of happiness to us; this argues a green heart, much want of mortification, though truth of grace be there. These apostles to whom Christ spake this parable of the vine, and unto them especially, how were they affected and transported with a trifle! Even that very night that Christ was to be attached, they strive for precedency, and 'who should be the greatest amongst them,' Luke xxii. 24, who should be chief of that noble order. And it was such a precedency which they affected as noblemen have in kingdoms, as appears by the following words: they shewed themselves but Gentiles in it, (as, ver. 25, Christ insinuates,) who stand upon their blood and their outward privileges. It was not for nothing Christ tells them in this parable they needed purging; but the reason was, they were but children yet, and 'babes in Christ,' now in their minority, and were not weaned from rattles and trifles. Christ was not yet crucified, nor they so thoroughly crucified with him as they were afterwards. The Holy Ghost had not yet come upon them as fire to burn up their lusts, and to consume this their dross. That other apostle, Paul,—who says of himself that he was 'born out of time,' in comparison to them,—had attained to a greater measure, he glorying in this as his highest title, that he was 'the least of the apostles.' This magnifying of outward things in our conceits and opinions is indeed but 'knowing things after the flesh,' as the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. v. 16, because the flesh doth fascinate and corrupt the judgment, in judging ourselves by such things. And this argues exceeding much want of mortification, for it

is lust that puts that lustre, and gloss, and varnish upon the things of the world; for the things in themselves are vain, and we have had experience that they are such. How comes it, then, we should esteem them and be taken with them, that we should have such high conceits of them? It is by reason of our lusts unpurged out, which represent them falsely; and therefore it is observable that John, 1 Epist. ii. 16, speaking of the things of this world, he puts *the lust* which is in us to express the *things* themselves. He says not, riches and preferment, &c., though he speaks of them, but the 'lusts of the eye' and 'pride of life;' so he expresseth them, because they are these lusts that make the things so glorious to us, and set a price upon them. And therefore so much magnifying and high esteem of outward things as there is in us, so much inordinate lust there is in the heart after them, and so much want of mortification; and when these lusts boiling in us fume up so high as to intoxicate and corrupt our esteem and judgments, which though grace should keep us from pursuing these vanities, that yet we look upon them with a wanton eye, and think great matters in them, and think ourselves, as it were, debarred and restrained of so much of our happiness, whilst we want and cannot enjoy them, this argues an unmortifiedness; for herein lies the power of mortification, even to 'count all things dross and dung,' to look upon them as 'crucified things,' to have them seem all as withered flowers, as 'small things,' as he speaks of man's esteem, 1 Cor. iv. 3.

(2.) Secondly, when our minds are carried out to superfluities, and more than needs, and are discontented with our own condition, though it be such as might content us, this argues a great want of purging, this is from superfluity of humours abounding in the heart. When they in the wilderness, though they had manna, yet they must have quails also. When there are such extravagant affections in us, that we think any other condition would please us better than our own, this argues much unmortifiedness, though it run not out into acts; it is the 'superfluity of naughtiness,' the excess of corruption that thinks 'stolen meat sweet,' as in the Proverbs. When our longings are wild and humorous, like the longings of women with child, whom nothing but some one odd thing they have set their fancy on will please; like sick men's stomachs, with whom nothing will down that is provided for them, but still they have a mind rather to something else; so nor we with what God allots us. And when we are environed about with comforts, yet all are nothing if some one be wanting. Such unmortified lusts we see in Samson; though a good man, yet none of the daughters of Israel could please, but he must have one of the Philistines, Judges xiv. 3.

(3.) Thirdly, when our minds are so glued to anything, as we cannot tell how to part with it, how to lose such a friend or such a convenience, we would think ourselves half undone if such or such a thing should fall out. David's heart was full of humours, and needed purging, when he ventured so much of his comfort in his Absalom alone, that when he was cast away he wished that he had died for him. It is good often to try our hearts, by supposing the worst that can befall us,—What if a change should come, such a thing I should be put to,—to see how the heart can bear it. When some men have a loss in their estates and riches, it is as it were raked out of their bellies, as Zophar speaks, Job xx. 15, and a piece even of their very heart goes with them.

(4.) Fourthly, when a man is still distempered under variety of conditions and businesses, and is inordinate in them all, it argues much unmortifiedness. As if he be to recreate himself, he is inordinate in it, and knows not when to end, and fall to his calling again; if to study, then he is also as violent in

it, and entrenches upon the duties should keep up his soul in health, as also upon the necessary refreshings his body requires. Broach the vessel where you will, if still it runs muddy and thick, it is a sign the vessel is full of ill liquor. To be distempered in some one particular is less, but when in every vein that is opened much corrupt blood comes forth, it is a sign the body is full of humours, and needs purging. A man that is in an ague, and when the cold fit takes him he is extreme cold, and when the hot fit comes he is on the contrary as extreme hot, it is a sign he is full of humours, which as they are purged out, one or the other abates, or both. If when a man abounds, then he is commonly confident, and forgets God; if when he wants, then he is as much on the other side distempered, and grows solicitous, distrustful. Sound bodies can bear sudden alteration of heat and cold, but distempered weak bodies cannot. Nature cannot bear a sudden alteration, but much grace can; 'I know how to want, I know how to abound,' Phil. iv. 12. He was much therefore mortified; he could work hard in summer, without much sweating, and he could undergo the cold of winter without catarrhs, and such weaknesses as others are subject to; his soul was well purged of humours. And so Job had learned to bless God when all was gone; he was a man thoroughly mortified before, he had carried himself in his best estate without security and carnal rejoicing; thus he says of himself, that he 'made not gold his hope, nor his confidence, nor had rejoiced because his wealth was great,' chap. xxxi. 25, and answerably, he behaves himself in his worst estate with patience and thanksgiving.

(5.) Fifthly, the more carnal confidence we have in the creatures, and bear ourselves upon them, and have our spirits strengthened and upholden by them, the more want of mortification. The Corinthians, though godly, yet they were very unmortified; therefore the Apostle says, they were 'rather carnal than spiritual,' 1 Cor. iii. 1. Now this their carnal-mindedness, among other things, was expressed in their carnal confidence they had in outward things. They had riches, and gifts, and learning, and they did swim in these; and reigned and domineered in their own thoughts, and excelled all other churches in their own opinions, and so despised others in comparison. They were carried aloft by these waxen wings, which I take to be the Apostle's meaning, 1 Cor. iv. 8, 'Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned:' they had riches and gifts, &c., and they thought themselves as kings, full of happiness, having the world before them, and were filled with conceits of it; and 'I would to God you did reign,' says he,—that is, that it were not *regnum in capite*, in your own conceits only,—and that there were indeed such real cause to applaud your own conditions. 'We are of the circumcision,' says the Apostle, 'and have no confidence in the flesh,' Phil. iii. 3. The more the heart is truly circumcised,—of which he there speaks, in opposition to those who rested in outward circumcision,—it trusteth not, nor beareth not itself, upon outward things, privileges, and endowments, as riches, blood, credit, learning, righteousness; these, when the heart is not circumcised, do puff it up; 'but we,' says he, 'have no confidence in the flesh,' either for comfort, or for justification, or anything else; but we rejoice in Christ Jesus.'

(6.) Sixthly, the more full of envyings, and heart-burnings against others, and of breaking forth into strife, our hearts are, and of strivings and contentions to get the credit, or riches, or victory away from others, &c., the more unmortified are our hearts, and the more need of purging. These overflowings of the gall and spleen come from a fulness of bad humours. 'Whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal?' 1 Cor.

iii. 3. That is, this argues you to be such, for envy and strife are not only lusts in themselves, but further they are such lusts as are always the children and fruit of some other; they are rooted in, and spring from inordinate affections to some things which we contend for; and accordingly, if this fire of envy or strife prove great, it argues the fuel—that is, the lusts after the things we envy others for—to be much more. For envy is but an oblique lust, founded on some more direct lust; these are but the outward flushings, that shew the distemper to be much more within. James iv. 1, 'From whence come wars and fightings amongst you? come they not hence, even of your lusts which fight in your members?' There is something the heart would have, as it follows in the 2d verse, 'Ye lust, and have not,' &c. A contentious spirit is an unmortified spirit; 'If ye bite and devour one another,' Gal. v. 15. 'This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' Mark the coherence, it comes in upon biting one at another, for such walk not in the spirit, flesh doth prevail in them, that is his meaning.

(7.) Seventhly, the less able we are to bear reproofs for the breakings forth of our lusts, the more unmortified it argues our hearts to be. It is a sign we love those much whom we cannot endure to hear spoken against: therefore, says the Apostle, 'Be swift to hear, but slow to wrath;' take heed of raging when you are touched. And it follows a verse after, 'Casting away all superfluity, receive the word with meekness,' for it is your lusts uncast out, unpurged, that cause that wrath and heart-boiling against reproof. That good king was in a great distemper of spirit when he cast the prophet in prison that reproved him, for 'he oppressed the people also at the same time,' as is said, 2 Chron. xvi. 10. He was then taken in the springtide and swelling of his lusts of covetousness and oppression; they brake down all that withstood and opposed the current of them: and if, as he in this fit at this time, so we be found in such passionate tempers upon such occasions of reproof ordinarily, it argues the habitual frame of our hearts to be much unmortified, as this argued him at this time to have been actually much distempered.

(8.) Eighthly, the more quick and speedy the temptation is in taking, the more unmortified the heart is: when an object at the first presenting makes the lust to rise, and passeth through at the very first presenting of it, and soaks into the heart, as oil into the bones, and runs through all; when a man is gunpowder to temptations, and it is but touch and take, so as there needs not much blowing, but the heart is presently on fire, as, Prov. vii. 22, it is said, 'He went straightway after her.' A man will find that when his heart is actually in a good temper, a temptation doth not so easily take; his heart is then, though tinder, yet as wet tinder, that is more slow in taking. As there is a preparedness to good works, so there is a preparedness to evil; when the heart is in a covetous humour, 'and will be rich, then a man falls into temptations and a snare,' 1 Tim. vi. 9. His lusts will nibble at every bait in everything he deals in; they will take presently. When the heart is thus bird-limed, then it cleaves to everything it meets with. It is a sign that the heart is not 'awake to righteousness,' as the Apostle speaks, but to sin rather, when a little occasion awakeneth a lust, and rouseth it; as when, on the contrary, if a great deal of jogging will not awaken a man's grace.

(9.) Ninthly, the more our lusts have power to disturb us in holy duties, and the more they prevail with the heart, then the more unmortified and profane the heart is; as to have unclean glances in hearing, and worldly thoughts then ordinarily to possess the heart, and to take it up much: 'They

are profane,' says God, Jer. xxiii. 11, 'for in my house I have found their wickedness.' If the heart be carried away and overcome with unclean and worldly thoughts, then this argues much unmortifiedness, and that the flesh is indeed much above the spirit. For why, then a man is in God's presence, and that should overcome and overawe the unregenerate part, if it were not impudent and outrageous; and besides, then the regenerate part hath the advantage, for the word and the ordinance is a stirring of it up and provoking it to holiness. And therefore that at such a time a man's lusts should be able to tempt and seduce a man's heart, it argues sin hath a great part in the heart, when it affronts God in his throne, when grace is *in solio*, where it would be. For the disciples then to be talking who should be greatest, when Christ had made so long a sermon to them, and had administered the sacrament to them, this argued much want of mortification in them; even as it were a sign that the orthodox party were but a weak party in a kingdom, if, whilst they are at sermons, Papists durst come in and disturb them, and put them out.

(10.) Tenthly, when the recalling former acts committed by a man prove still to be a snare to him, and being suggested by Satan as a means to quicken his lust, the thought thereof doth rather stir up his lust afresh, it is a sign of an unmortified frame. Thus it is laid to the charge of that nation, Ezek. xxiii. 21, that 'she multiplied her whoredoms in calling to remembrance the days of her youth, wherein she had played the harlot in the land of Egypt.' The remembrance of them was a snare to her, as appears by the 8th verse. It is a sign a man is deeply in love whenas he falls in love with the picture. When the remembrance of whence he is fallen should make him repent, that it should, on the contrary, cause him to commit the same sin again, it is a sign flesh hath much the better. To have the mind stirred with new objects and new temptations may stand with far less corruption and more grace, than to have it stirred afresh with the remembrance of the old. To find sweetness in a lust twice sod, which we have also often steeped, as I may so speak, in godly sorrow and hatred of it, and so boiled it in sour herbs; yet still to find sweetness in the remembrance of such an act, this argues much corruption. As the Apostle argues the sinfulness and strength of corrupt nature in him, that the law, which was holy and good, should stir up his lust whilst unregenerate; so may we, when the thought of a sin, which should stir up godly sorrow, should provoke and tickle corrupt nature again. Indeed, that the new scent of meat should have moved the Israelites would not have been so much, but that the remembrance of their flesh-pots should do it! That speech, Rom. viii., where we are commanded to 'mortify the deeds of the flesh,' may admit, among other, this interpretation also, that not only the lusts, but even former deeds and acts committed, which may prove an occasion of sin to us, and have a fresh verdure in our eye, are to be mortified.

CHAPTER IV.

Positive signs of growth in mortification, and God's purging of us.

2. AND so now I come to the second sort of signs—namely, positive signs of growth in mortification, and of God's purging of us.

(1.) First, the more insight a man hath into spiritual corruptions, together with a conflict against them, the more growth he hath attained unto in purging out corruptions; so as that now the chiefest of his conflict is come to be with spiritual lusts, not worldly lusts and gross evils; it is an evidence of his progress in this work. These ordinarily are sure rules, that whilst a man's conflict is with more outward gross evils, as uncleanness, worldly-mindedness, &c., so long and so much he is kept from the sight of those inward, hidden, close corruptions, which sit nighest to the heart. As also, on the contrary, the more a man is freed from, and hath got victory over such more outward evils, the more his thoughts and intentions are bent inward to the discovery of the other more spiritual wickednesses. And the reason is, for these spiritual lusts, as pride, carnal confidence in a man's own graces, self-flattery, presumption, and the like, these corruptions lie, as I may so express it, more up in the heart of the country; but those other, of worldly lusts, lie, as it were, in the frontiers and skirts of it: and therefore, until such time as a man hath in some good measure overcome those that encounter him at the borders, he comes not to have so through a discovery and constant conflict with those that lie higher up in the heart: 'Let us cleanse ourselves from all pollution, both of flesh and spirit,' says the Apostle, 2 Cor. vii. 1, which implies that there are two sorts of corruptions, one of the flesh or body, the other of the spirit or soul: for so the opposition there is to be taken, for else all lusts are lusts of the flesh; that is, of corrupt nature. Again, such corruptions cause 'a blindness, that a man cannot see afar off,' as 2 Pet. i. 9. Whilst a scholar that learns a tongue hath not learned to escape all grosser faults in grammatical construction, he cannot be supposed to have come to know the elegancies of the tongue, nor see his errors therein; so nor do men come to be critics indeed, and cunningly skilful in the more curious *errata* of their hearts and spirits, till they have attained to such a degree of mortification as to be free from grosser evils. And indeed, those who are grown in grace have attained ordinarily some freedom from such sins; therefore, says John, 1 Epist. ii. 14, 'You young men are strong, and have overcome that evil one:' they have attained so much strength as to overcome the grosser evils. So as, to allude to what the Apostle says in another case, they then come to conflict not so much with 'flesh and blood' and outward evils, as with 'spiritual wickednesses' within,—that is, with affections and dispositions contrary to the work of grace; and therein lies their chiefest exercise, which is not till they have some freedom and victory over the other, and so are at leisure to view these.

(2.) Secondly, we may discern our victory over our lusts by our ability

more or less to deny ourselves. The more we grow up to a readiness, willingness, and freeness, and cheerfulness of heart to deny ourselves when we are called and put upon doing of it, the more are lusts purged out; for the reason that our hearts consult so much with carnal ends in business, that we have so much ado with them ere we can bring them off to part with such and such things, as God and our own consciences do call us unto, is through want of purging. For all want of self-denial is from an adhesion to outward things. Were we free and unmarried men to the world, were our hearts loosened from all, and were all the secret *fibræ*, those stings of lusts that shoot into things, cut, it would be nothing to us to part with them: this was in that great Apostle, how ready was he to lay down his life! 'My life is not dear to me, so I may fulfil my ministration with joy;' and so when the time of his departure was at hand, says he, 'I am ready to be offered,' 2 Tim. iv. 6. He speaks it in the present tense, σπένδομαι, 'I am offered;' it was done in his heart already. As in like phrase of speech it is said, Heb. xi. 17, that 'Abraham offered up his son,' because in his heart he fully purposed it. When men must be forced by terrors of conscience, as Pharaoh with plagues, to let their credits or estates go by restitution, or for God and good uses, &c., it is a sign of want of purging. The more loosened a man is from the world and the things of it, the more prepared that man is for all works of self-denial, and the more purged. So when a man parts with all without sticking or higgling, as Abraham is said to 'believe without staggering,' it is a sign he hath attained to a good degree, even as that argued a strong faith, Rom. iv. 20. When a man hath an open and a large heart to God, as a liberal man hath an open hand to men, as Abraham had when he was willing to let God have his only son, it was a sign he was much weaned; when God can command anything thou hast at an hour's warning, as we say. Abraham stood not long deliberating, Shall I, shall I? but went 'early in the morning,' even the next morning, God having called for his son that very night, as it is likely by that in the 22d of Genesis, ver. 3; for the night was the time when God used to reveal himself by visions; and the next morning he went forth early.

(3.) Thirdly, the more constancy there is in our hearts and ways, the more even, stable in well-doing, and the more lasting, durable frame and temper for holiness we find our hearts to abide in, the more we are purged; for in that we find such sudden flowings and re-flowings in our hearts, that when a corruption seems to be at a low ebb, and our hearts in a good frame, within an hour or so a mighty tide comes in, and we find our hearts overflown with a sea of filth, such sudden alterations from the better to the worse do come from those vast seas of corruptions that are still within us, that tumble and float up and down in our hearts. So the Apostle intimates, 'Purge your hearts, ye double-minded.' That their hearts are of so unequal a temper, sometimes in hot fits, sometimes in cold, and so suddenly altered, this cannot be but from much corruption. This double-mindedness comes from want of purging. The Galatians were surely very weak and foolish, as he tells them, when they were so soon transported. He marvels not so much that they were removed, as that so soon, οὕτω ταχέως, so suddenly, Gal. i. 6, and brings it in as an evidence of their weakness, that they who would have 'given him their eyes' should now so much be altered and carried away; so much mortifiedness, so much constancy. Therefore, in the 5th of Galatians, ver. 24, 25, when in the 24th verse he had said, 'Those that are Christ's have crucified the affections with the lusts,' he adds in the 25th verse, 'If we live in the spirit, let us walk in the spirit:' the word imports a being constant

in the spirit. Then when lusts are crucified, then the Holy Spirit will rule us in our ways, and a holy frame of heart will be discovered, in a constant tract of holiness; we shall walk in the spirit, keep ourselves long in a spiritual frame and course, and not be biased aside; that we step out so much, is from strong lusts unmortified.

(4.) Fourthly, the more a man comes to a spiritual taste of the spiritual word, and that which is most spiritual therein, the more it is a sign that corruption is purged out. When a man comes to his stomach, it is a sign he is growing out of a sickness, and that the humours are much purged out. So, 1 Pet. ii. 1, 'Laying aside all malice,' &c., 'as babes desire the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted.' Therefore the more corruption is laid aside, the more we taste the word, and God in it; the more we taste, the more we desire it; the more we desire it, the more we grow.

(5.) Fifthly, when we are ashamed of former carriages and ways, as seeing and discerning those weaknesses we saw not before, as scholars use to be of their exercises a year or two after; so if we be ashamed of former prayers, hearings, &c., as that great proficient discerned in himself, who, looking back upon his first days of conversion, says, 'When I was a child, I spake as a child:' he speaks it, applying it to his growth of grace.

(6.) Sixthly, when in ordinary times of temptation a man finds a lust not so violent and raging as it was wont, but more impotent and weak. Look to your fits of sinning whether they become greater or less, for then a man's strength or weakness is discerned most; as the bodily strength is, when a man either goes about to put himself forth, or is assaulted and set upon. Many that are sick, whilst they lie still in their beds think they have a great deal of strength, but when they attempt to rise and walk they sink down again. As a man's weakness to good is discerned when he comes to do and to act it,—Rom. vii., 'to do I am not able,'—so a man's weakness to sin, or strength against it, is then also best discerned. The weakness or strength of a kingdom is best seen and discerned in time of war, when all forces are mustered up. Now, God sometimes appoints some more frequent assaults, and on purpose suffers 'the law in the members to war,' and to muster up all their force, that, as it is said of Hezekiah, a man 'might know what is in his heart.' Now, if then a man finds that the motions of sin in his heart do every temptation after other meet a hotter encounter than they had wont; that the resistance against sin grows quicker and stronger; that sin cannot advance and carry on his army so far as formerly, but is still encountered and met withal at the frontiers, and there overthrown even at the first setting out, so as it cannot carry it through the camp, (as Zimri did his mistress Cozbi,) as sometimes it had wont, whenas grace stood at the tent door, as Moses, weeping, yet unable to resist it; and although assaults and temptations do continue, that yet there is ground kept and won upon the encroachments of a lust, insomuch that at least the outward forts are kept by grace, —that is, outward acts are abstained from: now so far as the lust is not fulfilled as it had wont to be, and not only so, but the inroads of it are confined and contracted also to a narrower compass, and to have a lesser ground and space in regard of inward acts; also so far it is purged more forth. As, for instance, be it a lust of fancy, when it cannot boil up to such gross fancies as it had wont; be it a lust of pride, or uncleanness, or grosser acts, when it falls from bringing forth fruit, to bring forth but blossoms, but inward burnings, and from blossoms only to bring forth leaves, it is a sign *then it* is withering more and more. When the intention of mind in the

temptation, which is as the fire that makes it to boil, grows less and less; when the inordinate thirst is not so great in the time of the fit; when the inward acts are grown in their requests more modest, the lustings themselves pitch upon lower and inferior acts than they had wont; when their armies depart with lesser spoil, are content with them, whenas before they flew at the first onset to the highest kinds of villanies and outrages; when thus the overflowings of a man's lusts do abate and fall short, the tides lessen, overflow less ground, overspread less every day than another, this is another probable sign of a growth herein.

(7.) Seventhly, the more ability to abstain from occasions and opportunities of satisfying a man's lusts; as Job, a man much mortified, 'made a covenant with his eyes not to behold a maid,' and kept to it, chap. xxxi. 1. When a man hates the 'very garment spotted with the flesh;' it is a sign of a strong hatred, when a man cannot endure to come where one he loves not is, cannot endure the sight of him, anything that may put him in mind of him, not so much as to parley or to speak with him.

(8.) Eighthly, when our hearts do not linger after such objects as may satisfy our lusts when absent, but when out of sight they are out of mind; this is a good degree of mortification. We may find it in ourselves, that when objects are not presented, that yet there is in our hearts oftentimes a lingering after them, and this from themselves, without any outward provocation; that is far worse. Many a man, when he sees meat, finds he hath a stomach to it, which he thought not till it was set before him; but when a man longs after meat he sees not, it is a sign he is very hungry. As we see against rainy weather, before the rain begins to fall, the stones will *give*, as we use to say, and grow dank; so a man that observes his heart may find, before objects are presented, or actual thoughts arise,* a giving of his heart to such and such a lust, an inclination, a darkness, a moistness, a sympathising with such an object,—that is a sign of unmortifiedness. David was 'as a weaned child,' he had no thoughts of the dug, no longings after it; I have 'no high thoughts' after the kingdom, says he, Ps. cxxxi. A child that begins to be weaned, it may be, at first cries after the dug, though he sees it not; but afterwards, though it may be when he sees it he cries after it, yet not when absent. Objects present have a far greater force to draw, when absent less; therefore this is a further degree of mortification attainable. It was in Joseph, when his mistress tempted him from day to day; opportunity was ready, the object present, but he denied her. So in Boaz, a woman lay at his feet all night. So in David, when he had Saul in his lurch, might as easily have cut off his head as the lap of his garment; and was egged on to do it, but he was then weaned indeed, and did it not. When a man can look upon beauty and preferment, and truly say, They are no temptations to me. It is a sign of an unsound temper, when upon eating such or such meats, a man is presently put into the fit of an ague; a healthful man is not so. The prophet calls them 'the stumblingblock of their iniquity.' When a man is going on his way, and though he did not seek occasions of falling, yet meeting with them, he cannot step over them, but is caught, and stumbleth, and falls, it is a sign of unmortifiedness.

CHAPTER V.

Some cautions to prevent misjudging by false rules.—This case resolved, Whether growth in mortification may be judged by the ordinary prevailings of corruption, or actings of grace.

BESIDES these rules both these ways given, I will, in the third place, add some cautional considerations, to prevent misjudging of our growth in mortification, by such false rules as men are apt to be deceived, in judging worse or better of ourselves by, than the truth is, or than there is cause. Which considerations will also further serve as directions to us, as well as the former have done.

1. First, men may deceive themselves when they estimate their progress herein by having overcome such lusts as their natures are not so prone unto. The surest way is to take a judgment of it from the decay of a man's bosom-sin, even as David did estimate his uprightness by his 'keeping himself from *his iniquity*,' Ps. xviii. 23; so a man of his growth in uprightness. When physicians would judge of a consumption of the whole, they do it not by the falling away of any part whatever, as of the flesh in the face alone, or any the like; such a particular abatement of flesh in some one part may come from some other cause; but they use to judge by the falling away of the brawn of the hands, or arms and thighs, &c., for these are the more solid parts. The like judgments do physicians make upon other diseases, and of the abatement of them from the decrease in such symptoms as are pathognomical, and proper and peculiar to them. In like manner also the estimate of the progress of the victories of a conqueror in an enemy's kingdom is not taken from the taking or burning of a few villages or dorps, but by taking the forts and strongest holds, and by what ground he hath won upon the chief strength, and by what forces he hath cut off of the main army. Do the like in the decrease of, and victory over, your lusts.

2. Secondly, you must not judge of your mortification by extraordinary assistances or temptations; as you do not judge of the strength of a kingdom by auxiliary foreign forces, that are at extraordinary times called in. A young Christian shall, for his encouragement even in the heat of the battle, when he is ready to be overcome and carried away captive, find the Holy Ghost breaking in, and rescuing of him, as Jehoshaphat was (to allude to it) when 'he cried to the Lord;' whenas a Christian of much standing is left to fight it out hand to hand. Now it doth not follow that the other, because thus freed, hath the more strength. Again, on the other side, a man is not to judge of himself by his weakness in some one extraordinary temptation. A man that is very sick, and nigh unto death and dissolution, may, through much heat and stirring up of all his spirits, have the strength of five men in him, and much greater than when he was in health. And so a godly man, whose corruptions are weak, and more near to dissolution, yet in a fit may *have all* the corruption that is within him mustered up, and blown up by

Satan, and so it may for the present appear to have more strength than ever in all his life, and yet he may be much mortified. Even as Sarah may, by an extraordinary means, have pleasure in her old age, and bring forth a child when she had left* child-bearing long, and yet her 'womb was dead,' Rom. iv. 19. And as it may be true that one of small grace may have that little grace drawn out, and wound up to a higher strain, for one fit, brunt, and exercise; all the strings wound up to a higher note for some one lesson, than one haply of more grace ever felt, to higher acts of love to God, and of rejoicing in God, and purer strains of self-denial; yet take the constant strains of one's spirit that hath more grace, and the strings will ordinarily endure to stand higher, and continue so. So, on the contrary, one of much mortification may have his lusts spurred on faster, and boiled up higher by Satan's fires than one of less. The estimate of our growth must not therefore be taken by a step or two, but by a constant course; for as a man's sincerity is to be measured, so is his growth: even as a man's health is to be measured by the constant tenor of his temper.

Only, I will add three things to give further direction concerning such extraordinary cases of temptation:—

(1.) First, that it is certain that so much corruption as at such a time, and in such a fit, a man felt a-stirring in him, so much indeed and in truth there is of corruption in his heart; for the devil can put none in, but only acts and doth improve what is there already. For, as that speech of Christ implies, Satan can work but according to the matter he findeth in us: 'He cometh, and findeth no matter in me;' the wind adds no water to the sea, only can make the waves to rise and surge; the fire adds nothing to the water when it is set upon it, but attenuates it only, and causeth it to boil. And so in Hezekiah, when he was cast into that fit of pride, the text says that it was 'that he might know all that was in his heart,' 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. It was in his heart before.

(2.) Secondly, I add, that yet hence it cannot be infallibly inferred that a man hath, comparatively either to himself, more corruption in him than he had twenty years before, because more is stirred up; or that, comparatively to others, he hath more corruption than they, because more is now for a fit drawn forth. So that it follows not from hence that others which are kept free from such a temptation, that they have less† mortification because they were never cast into so hot and burning a fit. One whose body is less full of humours, and naturally of a more moderate temper for heat, may yet, through some accident or other, or disease, suppose the plague, be cast into hotter fits of a burning fever, than one whose temper is more fiery, and humours more abounding in him. To have recourse to the former instance. Hezekiah surely had more corruption twenty years before his recovery out of his sickness than at that time, and yet it wrought not so, that we read of, as it did then; not that the barrel was then fuller, but that now it was broached lower, and a greater vent given, and so it came more gushing out, dregs and all. That a man, after he is grown up to his full strength, falls into so great a sickness, such a one as he never had when he was a child, which maketh him weaker than when he was ten or twelve years old, doth not argue but that he is a man grown for all that. David, after a long growth, had a time of great sickness, whereby he lost the exercise, the lively, vigorous use of his graces; enfeebled by that sickness, he lost his taste in God's ordinances by it, and 'the joy of God's salvation,' as appears by the 51st Psalm.

(3.) And the third thing I would add is this, that such a one as is indeed

* Rather, 'passed the age of child-bearing.'—ED. † *Qu.* 'more'?—ED.

much mortified, if it happens he falls into such a fit, yet the greater measure of his mortification will appear afterwards, in that the lust will be weaker after his recovery again. It is in this as with a man that is in a hot fiery fit of a fever, though he have at that instant the strength of two men in him, as was said, yet afterward, when the spirits are ebbed and settled again, his body is the weaker for it; so is the body of sin, upon the resurrection of grace, after such a fall. Many grow more after sickness. For God's end being but to discover his weakness, and what he is in himself, and to rouse him out of his security, he then loves to manifest his power when once we have seen our weakness; and so 'makes his strength perfect in our infirmities,' when they are not ordinary, but beyond the ordinary temper and dispositions of our spirits.

Quest.—But then the question may be concerning the more ordinary passages of a man's life: Whether a man may measure and take a sure estimate of the inward root of corruption left in him, by the ordinary risings and stirrings of it, and his fallings into sin more or less? I speak not now of extraordinary fits, but of ordinary qualms and weaknesses.

Resolved.—To this I answer, that ordinarily men may conclude from the more or less busy they find corruption to be in them, that the more or less there is of corruption in them, and so thereby measure their growth; for grace and corruption are as two roots, and therefore the actions of them both are called their 'fruits,' Gal. v. 19, 22. Now Christ elsewhere gives us this rule of nature, to judge of the tree by the fruits, to proceed by in matters of grace also. And as by the fruit we may know of what species and kind the tree is, so likewise what plenty of sap there is at the root, by the plenty, or bigness, or fairness of the fruit it doth bring forth. The more inward corruption at the root, ordinarily the more fruit thereof appears in the life; and proportionably also of the tender fruits of the Spirit. And therefore Christ here says that the vine is to be 'purged, that it may bring forth more fruit;' because the more corruption is emptied, the more holiness will appear in your inward and outward fruitfulness. And the reason hereof is, because ordinarily as a thing is in being, so it is in working. *Læsa principia habent læsas operationes.* Children, the weaker, the more falls they have in their ordinary walkings; bodies, the more sickly, or the weaker and more unhealthy the κράσις and constitution is, the more qualms; and as they recover strength more and more, they find they outgrow such weaknesses. And therefore, ordinarily, according to what activeness a man finds of grace or sin in him, according are the inward principles of either of them more or less in him. For the soul of man, as it is an active thing, so being left to its ordinary course, it acts according to the sway, and bias, and inclination of the habits that are in it, which are also active, as both grace and sin are. As a bowl, when the force of the hand that threw it begins to decay, it is swayed by the bias, and lead that is in it; and so the less grace, the less, ordinarily, it acts graciously, and the weaklier. And then also the opposite corruption must needs be so much the more active; for the soul being active, abates not of its mettle, but it will still shew itself one way or other. The flesh will 'lust against the spirit' so much the stronglier, as the spirit is weaker, 'for they are contrary.' Yea, and thus God judgeth of the principles of grace in us, according as they act in us: he will judge of our mortification by the fruits of it in our lives and hearts; the more the fruits of sin grow on in us, the less mortified he will account us; as he will judge of faith by the works, so of mortification by the fruits. And therefore it is observable,

that he bids us mortify the deeds of the body, as well as the body of sin, Rom. viii. 13; for God will judge of the one by the other. Therefore the objects of mortification are the deeds of the body, as well as the inward principle of corruption, because the mortification of the inward principle will be seen and appear in the deeds.

Obj.—But it may be objected, that grace is acted, or lusts do stir, accordingly as the Spirit of Christ, who is a voluntary agent, doth act grace, or will leave a man; so that if he be pleased to stir that little grace in a weak Christian, he shall act it more, and if he leave a strong Christian to himself, he shall fall more.

But to this it is answered—

Ans. 1.—First, that though the Holy Ghost be a voluntary agent, and blows when and where he pleaseth, for his times of working, yet ordinarily he acteth grace in us, take our whole course, according to the proportion of grace given us, so as he that hath more habitual grace shall be more assisted and enlivened, which falls out according to that rule, which in this case will hold, *habenti dabitur:* Matt. xxv. 29, 'To him that hath shall be given,' if it be a true talent. Hence therefore he that had five talents gained more than he that had but two: for he gained his five more unto his five; the other but two more to his former two; though he that had but one is said to have gained none, because indeed it was not a true talent, for he 'seemed but to have it,' the text says. And the reason hereof is, because those habits of grace which God hath infused are his own works, and are ordained by him to be acted, and he delights still to crown his own works in us with more. And as he proportions glory to works, so he promiseth to act according to the principles of grace infused, which else would be in vain, they being ordained to that end. As the Apostle says of gifts, that they are 'given to profit withal,' so are graces to work, and therefore ordinarily God draws them out, where he hath bestowed them, as he doth gifts also, according to their proportion. And thus, *è contra*, it is for leaving a man to sin; the more corruption a man hath, the more ordinarily he lets it vent and discover itself, that so men that have many corruptions in them might know what is in their hearts; and so when God doth mortify them in them to thank him the more, the grace of which else would be to them lost, if God should mortify their lusts in them, without their seeing and bewailing them, and crying to him, 'O miserable man that I am!' and ordinarily see and discern them men would not, unless left to them. As in case of humbling a man, though God sometimes doth humble a man that hath less sins more than one that hath greater, to shew that he can give a spiritual light to see more sin in a little than others in much; yet ordinarily those are most humbled that have been greatest sinners, as Manasseh 'humbled himself greatly,' and Mary Magdalene 'loved much,' and the Apostle thought himself 'the greatest of sinners.' And thus it is in acting grace, or letting forth corruptions; it is according to their principles within.

Ans. 2.—And, secondly, that very acting grace doth increase habits: so as the increase of habits and inward mortification is proportioned according to the acting of grace by the Holy Ghost; for every abstinence doth mortify, as was said, and every act of grace doth, through the blessing of the Spirit, further sanctify and increase the habit: Rom. vi., 'You have your fruit in holiness.' When they do any duty, it makes the heart more inwardly holy, so as indeed the one cannot be without the other; but the more a man doth abstain out of right principles, by the assistance of the Spirit, the

more he grows: so as in the end all comes to one; he whose holiness is acted most hath in the end most habitual grace, and thereby often it comes to pass that 'he that is first comes to be last, and he that is last first.'

Yet there are two limitations to be put in about this:—

(1.) First, I grant, for some times of men's lives, that God doth act some men's graces more, who have yet less grace, and leave those to sins who have more grace. So he left Peter, who in all appearance had more grace than any of the twelve, yet God left him to deny Christ more foully and falsely than any of the other.

But then let the ends of God be considered why he doth it:—

[1.] First, in case of too much confidence upon inherent grace, and the strength of it. When we trust to habitual grace received, then Christ, to shew that it is a new grace, to assist that grace, and to the end that it may be acknowledged that he that gives one grace is not bound to give another, may in this case leave one that hath indeed more grace to the prevailing of corruptions more. It falls out sometimes that when men are young Christians, and new born, God adds much assistance, and this for their encouragement; and as you carry young children in your arms, and so they are kept from falls more than some more elderly that are let go alone, thus, Hos. xi. 3, 'God takes them by the arms when a child,' ver. 1, but then 'they acknowledge it not,' as it follows there, and are apt to think that that strength and life they have is from themselves, and so God afterwards leaves them, when grown more elderly. Those Christians who walk most sensibly of their own weakness, and observe God's keeping them from sin, and attribute this to him, such God delights to help, though for the present they have less habitual grace. And so those Christians that sooner come to the knowledge of that way of dependence upon Christ,—some come to see it the first day, and make use of it, others not so clearly a long while,—they shall be more assisted than another. To many that way so soon is not so clearly opened.

[2.] Again, secondly, sometimes God will magnify this his acting grace, as I may call it, more in one man than in another, seeing it is a grace. That one Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul, did more than all the apostles; shall we thereby infallibly conclude he had more inherent grace than they all? but that he had more assistance. As God sometimes useth men of weaker gifts to do more than men of greater; so men of weaker graces, and less growth, to shame the other. As there are 'diversities of gifts,' so of 'operations and exercise' of those gifts, 1 Cor. xii. 6, the 'Spirit dividing as he will,' ver. 11. God casts aside one of eminent gifts into a place or condition wherein they are not useful, and so he may one of much habitual grace.

[3.] Thirdly, he acts often according to actual preparation; the habitual preparation lies in habits, and is more remote; as strings may be good, yet out of tune, and so not played upon.

[4.] Again, fourthly, God may leave a Christian of more grace and growth to more stirring of corruptions, in case he means yet to bring him to a higher pitch of humiliation, and that by sins. It is in this his dealing of leaving men to corruptions, and the vigorous conflicts with them, as it is in his leaving his people sometimes to those other evils of afflictions. God humbleth his either by afflictions or by sins, and his manner in both is sometimes alike. You shall see one who hath attained to a great measure of grace already, and that by affliction, and yet never to be out of the fire, but God still followeth him with one affliction or another; whereas one of less growth and grace, who in that regard hath more need, shall have fewer afflictions in

his course. And what is the reason of this difference? It is not that the grown Christian hath simply more need of affliction than the other, but because God intends to bring him on yet to a further degree of grace. As refiners of sugar, taking sugars out of the same chest, some thereof they melt but once, and another part of it they melt and refine again and again; not that that which they refine twice hath more dross in it, but because they would have it more refined, doubly refined. And as God deals thus in afflictions, so also in leaving of his people to the stirring of corruptions, which of all afflictions is the greatest to humble a holy heart. And thus in experience it is found that he doth sometimes leave a grown Christian to conflict with corruptions more than a weaker Christian; not that he hath more in him, but because he means to bring on that grown Christian to a further degree of humiliation; he is not humbled as he means to have him yet. And whereas God humbleth some men by afflictions, he humbleth others by sins. And nothing humbleth more than sins, for crosses do but humble by revealing sin as the cause; and nothing will humble a grown Christian more than to see such shameful soul-corruptions still stirring in him: the greatest aggravation of which to him will be in this, that after so long a time such lusts should be so lively in him; to have such gross faults in his exercises after he hath been so long at school, this shames him. For a grown Christian to be disguised with a corruption, and when his hair is grown, to have it shaven off, as David's messengers were ashamed of it, so how doth it shame and humble him! Thus Hezekiah, though he was much humbled by a sickness to death, but because he was not humbled enough, and so far as God meant to bring him, therefore God let loose pride on him, and then he further humbleth himself and all Israel, as it is 2 Chron. xxxii. 26. Upon some men God shews his free grace in keeping them from sin; upon others he spends it in pardoning them. These are but two several ways he hath of laying it out. And so sometimes he shews his grace in keeping those of less grace, and again in letting those of more to struggle with their lusts: and such sicknesses are not to death or to weaken them, but for the glory of God and their further growth; for this will be the effect and consequent of such stirrings in grown Christians, that as their fits of corruptions stirring are great, so their humblings will be greater. Grace being much in them, will shew itself that way; great fits of sinning have intermingled with them great exercises of repentings, and the growth of their grace will shew itself in them, and appear in them. Even as in men that are cheerful naturally, but sometimes oppressed with melancholy, when those pressures are over they are most merry, their spirits breaking forth, being at liberty, they shew themselves as much on the contrary in mirth; so is it here when grace gets above again. As it is in the body when the spirits are not weak, but only are kept under by humours, when they do once get up, they then shew their strength in causing the body to grow the more,—as in many young men after a sickness, where strength of nature is,—and so thereby they become after often the better, and more lively; but if the natural spirits be weak, it is not so.

(2.) A second limitation is, that though one of less growth in mortification may sometimes by watchfulness keep under his lusts more, and act that little grace he hath, more than haply he doth who hath yet radically more grace; therefore says the Apostle, 'Stir up the gift that is in thee.' To Timothy he speaks it, and he exhorts, Gal. v., even young Christians 'to walk in the spirit;' that is, to have the spirit kept above the flesh, so as a man shall have great hand over his corruptions, that they break not forth.

Now, I say that this exhortation doth belong unto and concerneth the youngest Christians; for he speaks to all that have spiritual life begun in them: ver. 25, 'If we live in the spirit, let us,' says he, 'walk in the spirit,' and then 'we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh,' ver. 16. A weak body, though weak, yet if he useth care, may keep himself from distempers as much as some man who is strong, but grows careless and neglects his health. But yet though one of less grace be thus actually more watchful, yet he may discern the want of growth by this:—

[1.] First, that still his lusts rise oftener, and that with delight, and are apter to catch fire presently, although they be smothered as fast as they catch. His case then is as if there were a heap of straw in a room where fire is, where sparks fly about, still taking fire upon every occasion; but he that keeps the straw is careful still to put it out.

[2.] And, secondly, in this case they shall find the strength of their corruptions in privative workings against grace, and distracting and disturbing them, deadening their hearts in duties; and therefore when the Apostle had exhorted such to 'walk in the spirit, so as not to fulfil the lusts,' mark what follows: Yet, says he, the flesh will discover itself in 'lusting against the spirit,' take what care you will, so as a man 'shall not be able to do what he would,' Gal. v. 16, 17; and the more strong it is, the more it will shew itself strong in disturbing: so as Christians not grown up, that are very watchful over their hearts, do keep as it were but negative Sabbaths, and are therein like unto those watchers and keepers of good rule in great churches, where there are many sleepers; they have so much to do to watch those boys that sleep and are idle at church, as they cannot attend the sermon. For though, by reason of watchfulness, corruption may be kept from discovering itself in open unruliness much, yet it can never, by all the watchfulness in the world, be brought on to duties, but so much as is in the heart will discover itself either in opposition to them or a hypocritical joining in them. Although the Papists may be kept by a waking State from venting that malice of their hearts in rebellion, yet they cannot be brought to join with us in holy duties; no more will corruption, unless in hypocrisy; and therefore so much as is doth still discover itself in them.

CHAPTER VI.

Five cautions more to prevent such misjudgings.

3. A THIRD caution to prevent misjudging: If a man will not be mistaken in judging his growth in mortification comparatively with others or with himself, he must consider his occasions and opportunities to draw him out. Thus, a man when he had more corruption, yet less occasions and provocations to sin, may have corruption less stirring in him than when he is more grown up in grace, if his temptations were then greater. The same tree standing in the shade, where also the rain comes not to it, when transplanted where both sun and rain fall upon it, may be more fruitful than formerly. David, when under afflictions in the wilderness, and wanting opportunities, how strict was he, and 'kept himself from his iniquity!' Ps. xviii. 23. But when he came to the delicacies of a kingdom, though he was grown up more and more in grace, yet how did he fall! As to aggravate the sin of not growing more, the proportion of means every one hath had is to be considered; and for one who hath had much means to grow much, for him is less than one who hath less means: so in the stirring or declining of sin, opportunities and occasions are also to be considered; as if a man be transplanted out of a full condition into an empty, if then many of his lusts do not stir so much as before, no wonder. Even as if a man when cast into a sweat by reason of multitude of clothes, it is no marvel if, when clothes are taken off, he sweat less.

4. A fourth thing to be considered, to keep us from mistakes herein, is, that he whose spirit is naturally active, his lusts, though weaker than another man's whose spirit is slower, may be yet more quick and apt to break forth more than his. Peter was of a bold spirit, and so spake often rashly, and vented corruption more than the other disciples, insomuch as he once provoked Christ to call him Satan, not that he had less grace, but a more active spirit. Yea, he might have more grace, and less of corruption stirred in him, only a more forward natural spirit, that was apt to put itself forth. As an angry man, whose spirit is quick, may soon be stirred, and in the forwardness of his spirit to action, give a man a blow, when one given to malice will scarce give you an ill word, whose lusts of revenge yet burn inwardly more. Gunpowder will take and fall into a blaze sooner than lime, yet lime hath more innate heat, and burns more within; some have speedier vent. Those two brethren, John and James, 'sons of thunder,' as Christ calls them, how soon was their choler up! They had quick and hot spirits, as Christ tells them, 'Ye know not what spirit ye are of,' Luke ix. 55.

5. Fifthly, if we would judge aright what measure of true mortification is in us, we must not take into the reckoning what restraining grace doth in us, but observe that apart, and cast that up in a sum by itself. For this you must know, that even in the regenerate, all their abstinence from sins is not from mere mortification, but restraining grace continues even after rege-

neration to contribute to it, and so make mortification seem the greater. It was not merely and only mortification of the lust of anger that made Moses so meek; for at another time, when he was left, what a chafe was he in, when he called them all rebels, and said in a heat that he must fetch water out of the rock for them! It was his temper and disposition of nature helped to make him so eminent in ruling that passion above any other, that he is said to be 'the meekest man on earth.' It was not simply, merely mortification that made that great apostle, Paul, so eminently chaste; but over and besides what mortification helped him in it, he had a 'peculiar gift,' as he calls it, 1 Cor. vii. 7; he speaks of it as of a gift, not a grace, such as might be in reprobates. 'For,' says he there, 'every one hath his proper gift.' So it was not mere mortification that made Luther never troubled with covetousness, but the freeness and generousness of his spirit that helped him in it.

Now, if all these would have cast up what grace and mortification they had attained to, they must have reckoned restraining grace by itself, (which may be observed by what our virtues were before conversion,) which though now sanctified,—that is, helping forward sanctification, and making the abstinence easier,—yet is not to be reckoned true sanctification. As goldsmiths mingle in all the silver they work some other metals to make it more malleable, so are those common graces mingled with true in this life, where sanctification is imperfect, which do help them and eke them out. Grace set in a good nature seems a great deal more, and goes further than in a bad. Wine that is of itself somewhat pleasant, a little sugar will make it sweeter to the taste than a great deal of sugar will do sour wine. Therefore let every one consider what natural ingenuity, and modesty, and education did in him before conversion; and let him know that, now he hath true grace, these help him still, and stand him in stead as much as ever, although he hath a further new principle of grace in him beyond these. Grace in this life, and whilst imperfect, takes not away such common gifts, but sanctifieth and useth them, as the reasonable soul doth a quick fancy or memory, which are sensitive faculties, and do make his ability to abstain from such and such sins more easy. Indeed all such gifts will be swallowed up in glory. And therefore many who have less grace, yet seem in many carriages more mortified than those who have more grace, they will be less impatient in a cross, less stirred and provoked with an injury. A man who hath been less helped by restraining grace before conversion, and had his lusts more outrageous, if he hath them now under, it is a sign he hath much more mortification in him than one who was naturally civil. And I appeal to every godly man's conscience, it is not only simply mortification that makes him always to abstain from sins, but shame, modesty, terrors of conscience strike in at a pinch, when strength of mortification had failed him else; and many accidental things, ordered by God's providence, hinder and keep God's people from sinning. And as David was fain to make use of Goliah's sword, and take in discontented persons that had not the same ends that he had, to strengthen himself against Saul; so is grace fain to take in fleshly dislikes and discontents against sin, to help it in a pinch, till it hath got the victory. For instance, it was not Judah's grace so much kept him from killing Joseph, for then he would not have consented to sell him, but nature wrought in him, and made him abhor the killing him: 'Is it not our brother, and our flesh? and what profit is it to kill him?' Gen. xxxvii. 26. So God prevented David in his murdering Nabal's family by an external means, whenas his grace else had not kept him from revenging himself causelessly upon his

family, for they were in no fault; his grace alone had not done it, for his passion was up, and he in a rage, and fully resolved to do it. But God used another means, and sent Abigail submissively to meet him; and her lowly submission and elegant oration won him, and cooled him: though this David acknowledgeth God's hand in it, and was glad he was so kept, as a godly man will, and hath cause, when he is hindered of his purpose in sinning. As he says, Phil. i. 18, 'I rejoice that Christ is preached, though out of envy,' so if sin be abstained from, though by any means; yet God did rather by this means restrain him than by his fear of God, or the grace in his heart; but God kept him by her coming, 1 Sam. xxv. 34. 'For in very deed,' says David, 'as the Lord liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and met me, surely there had not been left a man unto Nabal.' So shame moved Judah. Fear of being destroyed moved Jacob to reprove the sin of his sons, and is all the argument he useth, Gen. xxxiv. 30. So that in an evening, when thou castest up thy abstinences of that day, think not how much thou hast abstained from sin or denied thyself, but how much out of hatred of it, and the spirit of mortification, how much of that there is in thy abstinence, and accordingly measure thy growth in it.

6. Sixthly, another false rule is, when men judge of their mortification, and the measure of it, by their present listlessness of the heart to sin: which though it be true, that where true mortification is there is a listlessness and a deadness, and so much mortification, so much deadness, Rom. vi. 2, 'How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?'—and indeed, to live in it is to take pleasure in it;—but yet this you must know, there are many things which in a godly man may add to his deadness to sin besides true mortification, and so make it seem greater than it is in truth; and therefore it may be a false rule to judge by, if it be not warily considered and distinguished. Sickness breeds a listlessness; when we are sick, our lusts are sick together with us; and as we gather strength, they gather up their crumbs again: Job xxxiii. 19, 20, then his 'soul abhors dainty food.' Suppose he be a glutton, old age brings a listlessness: Eccles. xii. 1, 'When the evil days come, wherein a man says he hath no pleasure in them;' as Barzillai had no taste in his meat, by reason of old age. So when our expectations or desires are crossed, or are like to be, and we begin to fail of those main props of the comfort of our lives, we are apt to have a listlessness to all other pleasures; when some one thing that was a sauce to all the rest is gone, or like to go, we then have no stomach to all the rest, and we are weary of living, as David was when Absalom was gone: 'Would I had died for thee!' Some great cross coming may, like thunder, sour all our joys and delights, and make them stale to us, and as dead drink to the stomach. Terror of conscience may, like an eclipse, overspread our spirits, and then all things lose their beauty and lustre, as things in the dark use to do; as Job says of himself in his desertion, that his soul had no more sweetness in all comforts than in 'the white of an egg.' For such occasions as these do draw the intention another way, and do take the mind up about God's wrath, or the afflictions we are in, so as it cannot run out to sin; and intention, you know, is the cause of all pleasure. As therefore, when by study the spirits are drawn up to the head, a man's stomach decays to that meat he most loved, so when terrors drink up the spirits, as Job speaks; but when that heat is over, and intention dismissed, a man recovers his stomach again: and so do men their appetites to sin, when they come forth of terrors.

And this will help you to find out the true reason why that young Chris-

tians are often more dead to all pleasures of sin than those who are grown up, or than themselves are when grown up. They are often then altogether dead to all mirth and other contentments, and yet they are not more mortified than afterwards, for then legal humiliation adds to their deadness. And besides that first deadly blow which Christ gave their lusts then in part, the law also and the bitterness of sin did lay that part of their lusts which remained unkilled in a swoon, that one would think all were dead. 'Sin revived,' saith Paul, 'and I died,' Rom. vii. 9. He speaks of that time when he lay humbled for sin, during which time, we read in the Acts, he fasted. He had no mind to meat nor drink; for three days he forgot all. And again, as then they are usually so taken up about pardon of sin, and the obtaining thereof, that all the spirits retire to the heart to relieve it, and to encourage it to seek out for pardon, and so sin is left in a swoon, and it seems quite dead; but by degrees men come out of that swoon, and sin revives, and then men think they decay in mortification. Again, young Christians sometimes, and others afterwards, for some honeymoons of their lives, are entertained with raptures and ravishments, joy unspeakable and glorious, and then they seem in a manner wholly dead to sin, and walk so; but as the others are in a swoon, so they are in an ecstasy; but when they are out of it, then sin comes to itself again. Those joys, whilst they last, make a man's actual present deadness to sin seem more than habitually and radically it is indeed. As a man that hath tasted some sweet thing, whilst the impression upon his palate lasteth he hath no relish of meat, so whilst the impressions of spiritual joy; but when their mouths are washed once, and their sense of that sweetness gone, they find their wonted relish of them. Thus spiritual joys do, for the time they are upon the heart, much alter the taste; but yet much of that alteration is adventitious and not wholly radical, or altering the sinful faculty itself; though it doth add much that way, yet not so much as they seem to do at that present, the sense of that sweetness is fresh in his heart.

Now therefore, to give a help or two to difference what is real and true mortification from this seeming listlessness and deadness to it:—

(1.) First, true mortification makes a man not only listless to sin, but to have a quick hatred against it, a hatred aiming at the destruction of it; but false listlessness takes but the heart off it, doth not set it against it. How often are these yoked together in Ps. cxix., 'I hate sin, and every false way,' with this, 'Thy law do I love!' The heart being quickened with love to God and to his law, is carried out against sin, and not only taken off from it to have no mind to it, but to have a mind against it to destroy it. There is the same difference between mortification and listlessness that there is between true patience and senselessness. Senselessness is a dull, stupid bearing of pains, but patience is joined with a quick sense of them, which ariseth from strength of spirits, that, being quick and vigorous, are the more sensible of pain or pleasure; so true mortification is joined with an active hatred that flies out against sin, which comes from liveliness of affection to the contrary.

(2.) Secondly, true mortification is joined with activeness and life in the contrary duties: Rom. vi. 11, 'Reckon yourselves dead unto sin, and alive unto God.' That false listlessness is but a dead palsy that doth take these members of sin, but true mortification is with a new life, a resurrection, strengthening a man to walk so much the more nimbly in the ways of God, Rom. vi. 4, 5. Young Christians, and such as have a false listlessness and deadness, you shall find them complain that their mortification is more than vivification; they will find they are more dead to the world than quickened to God. True mortification doth not dull the spirits, but sets them at liberty, as purg-

ing the humours out doth. It makes the body more light and nimble; whereas false listlessness causeth a deadness, a dulness to everything else. Those false causes of listlessness contract the mind, as a bladder that is clung, and dried, and 'hung up in the smoke,' as David compared his condition in terrors of conscience; but mortification empties it of the sin, and fills it with grace, so as the mind is as full and wide as before, only filled with grace now instead of sin.

7. Seventhly, a man is not to judge of his growth in mortification simply by the keenness of his affection against sin, though that is good and blessed, but by his strength against it. As there is a fond love, which is not so strong and solid, which will not do so much for one, or hold, if it come to the trial and be put to it, that yet hath a more seeming edge in it; so there is a keenness of hatred that hath not so much strength. A man that is angry seems to have more keenness of affection against him he falls out with, and in his rage vows never to be reconciled, and could eat him up; whenas yet a malicious man hates more strongly. So do young Christians their sins, having lately felt the bitterness of them; and then many other inconveniences, besides the contrariety of them to God, do egg on and provoke their spirits against them; but like as a sharp knife that is weak, the edge is soon turned and blunted, so in a temptation, they are for all their edge soon overcome. For all those concurring inconveniences and apprehensions of their hurt by them makes their spleen indeed greater, but it adds not to their strength and courage to resist them; like a stomachful boy, that cries he cannot have the victory, yet is weak, and easily laid on his back; his stomach is more than his strength. The hurt that comes by sin to us at first lately felt, helps to sharpen the edge, but adds no metal, and so our weapons are beaten to our heads again when we use them. What an edge of spirit had Peter raised up against denying Christ! He would die rather; he spake then as he thought, and he would have died in the quarrel, for he drew his sword, but afterwards he wanted strength to his stomach; how easily was he overcome, being yet but weak in grace! Therefore judge of your growth herein by your strength to resist. Hence the Apostle prays, 'they may have strength in the inward man,' Eph. iii. 16; and in chap. vi. 13, he speaks of 'ability to stand in the evil day.' Although this let me add, that every man should keep up his heart in this continual keenness and edge of spirit against sin, and whet his heart against it; for that will cause a man to use his strength the more against it, and to put it forth. A man that keeps his heart in a revengeful, vexed, spleenful spirit against sin, he will easier cut through a temptation: and though if a Christian want metal, though he hath an edge, he may be foiled; yet when edge and metal both meet, a man walks above his lusts. If either be wanting, a man may be foiled.

PART III.

RESOLVING SOME QUESTIONS CONCERNING GROWTH IN *MORTIFICATION* AND *VIVIFICATION*.

CHAPTER I.

Two questions resolved concerning growth in mortification.

I WILL now conclude this discourse about growth in grace with answering some questions which may be made concerning this our growth, both about mortification and about increase in positive graces; which I did reserve to this last place, that I might handle them together.

Quest. 1.—The first question concerning the purging out of sin is, Whether every new degree of mortification, and purging out of sin, be always universal, extending itself to every sin? So as the meaning of this, that God goes on to purge, should be, not only that he goes on first to purge forth one sin, then another, but that he goes on to purge out, by every new degree of mortification, every sin together; so as when any one sin is more weakened, all the rest in a proportion grow weak also.

Ans.—To this I answer affirmatively, that every new degree of mortification is universal. Because when the Scripture speaks of our growth therein, he speaks of it as extending itself to every sin. So, Eph. iv. 22, when he exhorts the Ephesians, who were mortified already, to a further progress in it, he exhorts them to 'put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.' It is not one lust that is the object of mortification, and the growth of it, although he mentions particular lusts afterwards, but the whole man that is corrupt, and all its lusts. And thus he there speaks of daily growth therein; for of that he had spoken in the former verses, from the 12th verse, and goes on to speak of it and exhort to it. Thus, in like manner, Gal. v. 24, it is called 'crucifying the flesh with the lusts:' not one lust, but the flesh, the whole bundle, the cluster of them all; and in that it is called crucifying, it implies it also, for of all deaths that did work upon every part, it did stretch every nerve, sinew, and vein, and put all the parts to pain: and this going on to mortify sin is called, Rom. vi., 'the destroying of the body of sin,' of the whole body. It is not the consumption of one member, of the lungs, or liver, &c., but it is *consumptio totius*, a consumption of the whole body of sin, so as every new degree of mortification is the consuming of the whole. And therefore also, Col. iii., where in like manner he exhorts to growth therein, he exhorts to 'mortify earthly members'—every member. And the reasons hereof are, because—

(1.) First, true mortification strikes at the root, and so causeth every branch to wither: for all sinful dispositions are rooted in one, namely, in 'love of pleasure more than of God;' and all true mortification deads a man to the pleasure of sin, by bringing the heart more into communion and into love with God; and therefore the deading to any sin must needs be general and universal to every sin. It is as the dying of the heart, which causeth all the members to die with it; for that is the difference between restraining grace, which cuts off but branches, and so lops the tree, but true mortification strikes every blow at the root.

(2.) Secondly, every new degree of true mortification purgeth out a sin, *as it is sin*, and works against it under that consideration; and if against it as sin, then the same power that works out any sin works against every sin in the heart also. Now that every new degree works against a sin, as it is sin, is plain by this, because if it be purged out upon any other respect, it is not mortification.

(3.) Thirdly, the Spirit, and the virtue that comes from Christ, which are the efficient causes of this purging out a sin, do also work against every sin, when they work against any one; and they have a contrariety to every lust; they search into every vein, and draw from all parts. Physicians may give elective purges, as they call them, which will purge out one humour, and not another; but Christ's physic works generally, it takes away all sorts of distempers.

Obj.—And whereas the objection against this may be, that then all lusts will come to be equally mortified—

Ans.—I answer, No, for all lusts were never equally alive in a man; some are stronger, some weaker by custom, through disposition of body and spirit; and therefore, though mortification extends itself to all, yet there being an inequality in the life and growth of these sins in us, hence some remain still more, some less mortified: as when a flood of water is left to flow into a field, where many hills are of differing height, though the water overflows all equally, yet some are more above water than others, because they were higher before of themselves. And hence it is that some sins, when the power of grace comes, may be in a manner wholly subdued,—namely, those which proceed out of the abundance of naughtiness in the heart, as swearing, malice against the truth; and these the children of God are usually wholly freed from, and they seem wholly dead; being as the excrements of other members, and being as the nails and the hair, they are wholly pared off, as was the manner to a proselyte woman; the power of grace takes them away, though other members continue vigorous. And therefore of swearing Christ says, 'What is more than Yea, yea, and Nay, nay, is ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ,' out of a profane heart. As when a man is a-dying, some members are stiff and cold, and clean dead long afore, as the feet, whilst others continue to have some life and heat in them; so in the mortification of a Christian, some lusts that are more remote are wholly stiff and stark, when others retain much life in them.

Quest. 2.—The second question is, Whether, when I apply Christ, and the promise with the virtue of Christ, for the mortification of some one particular lust or other, and do use those right means, as prayer, fasting, &c., for the special mortification of some one lust, whether that lust thereby doth not become more mortified than other lusts do?

Ans.—I answer, Yes, yet so as in a proportion this work of mortification runs through all the rest; for as in washing out the great stains of a cloth, the lesser stains are washed out also with the same labour, so it is here. There-

fore the Apostle in all his exhortations to mortification, both Eph. iv. and Gal. v. and Col. iii., though he exhorts to 'the putting off the old man,' the whole body of sin, yet instances in particular sins, because a man is particularly to endeavour the mortification of particulars, as it were apart; and yet because in getting them mortified the whole body of sin is destroyed, therefore he mentions both the whole body and particular members thereof apart, as the object of mortification. And to that end also doth God exercise his children, first with one lust, then with another, that they may make trial of the virtue of Christ's death upon every one. And therefore Christ bids us to 'pull out an eye,' and 'cut off a hand,' if they offend us: for mortification is to be by us directed against particular members; yet so as withal, in a proportion, all the rest receive a further degree of destruction. For as a particular act of sin, be it uncleanness, or the like, when committed, doth increase a disposition to every sin, yet so as it leaves a present greater disposition to that particular sin than any other, and increaseth it most *in potentia proxima*, though all the rest *in potentia remota*: so in every act of mortification, though the common stock be increased, yet the particular lust we aimed at hath a greater share in the mortification endeavoured, as in ministering physic to cure the head, the whole body is often purged; yet so as the head, the party affected, is yet chiefly purged, and more than the rest.

CHAPTER II.

Three questions resolved concerning positive growth.

OTHER questions there are concerning that other part of our growth, namely, in positive graces and the fruits thereof.

Quest. 1.—As, first, Whether every new degree of grace runs through all the faculties?

Ans.—I answer, Yes: for as every new degree of light in the air runs through the whole hemisphere, when the sun shines clearer and clearer to the perfect day, which is Solomon's comparison in the Proverbs; so every new degree of grace runs through, and is diffused through the whole man. And therefore also, 1 Thess. v. 23, when the Apostle there prays for increase of grace, he prays they may be 'sanctified wholly, in body, soul, and spirit.' And every new degree, though it begins at the spirit, the understanding, yet goes through all; for so, Eph. iv. 23, 24, 'Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new man:' it runs therefore through the whole man, having renewed the mind; as the work of grace at first, so after still continually 'leaveneth the whole lump.'

Quest. 2.—Whether one grace may not grow more than another?

Ans. 1.—I answer, first, that it is certain that when a man grows up in one grace, he doth grow in all; they grow and thrive together. Therefore, in Eph. iv. 15, we are said to 'grow up into him *in all things*.' Growth from Christ is general; as true growth in the body is in every part, so this in every grace. Therefore, 2 Cor. iii. 18, we are said to be 'changed into the same image from glory to glory.' Every increase stamps a further degree of the whole image of Christ upon the heart. So the Thessalonians, their faith and their love did both overflow, 2 Thess. i. 3.

Ans. 2.—Yet, secondly, so as one grace may grow more than some other:—

(1.) Because some are more radical graces, as faith and love, therefore of the Thessalonians' faith the Apostle says, 2 Thess. i. 3, that it did 'grow exceedingly;' and then it follows, their love 'did overflow.'

(2.) Some graces are more exercised, and if so, they abound more; as though both arms do grow, yet that which a man useth is the stronger and the bigger, so is it in graces. In birds, their wings, which have been used most, are sweetest to the taste. As in the body, though the exercise of one member maketh the body generally more healthful, yet so as that member which is exercised will be freest from humours itself; so it is here. So 'tribulation worketh patience, patience experience,' Rom. v. Many sufferings make patience the less difficult, and much experience, many experiments, make hope greater.

(3.) Again, thirdly, that some graces are more in some than others, appears hence; for what is it makes the differing gifts that are in Christians but a several constitution of graces, though all have every grace in them? As now in the body every member hath all singular parts in it, as flesh,

bones, sinews, veins, blood, spirits in it, but yet so some members have more of flesh, less of sinews and veins, &c., whence ariseth a several office in every member, according as such or such similar parts do more or less abound in a member. The hand, because it hath more nerves and joints in it than another member, though less flesh, yet how strong is it, and fit for many offices! The foot is not so. So in Christians, by reason of the several constitution of graces, and the temper of them more or less, have they several offices in the church, and are fitted for several employments. Some have more love, and fit for offices of charity; some more knowledge, and are fit to instruct; some more patience, and are fitter to suffer; some for self-denial, and accordingly do grow in these more specially.

Quest. 3.—The third question is, Whether this increase be only by radicating the same grace more, or by a new addition?

Ans.—I answer, that by adding a new degree of grace, as in making candles, which is done by addition; when a candle is put anew into the fat of boiled tallow, every time it is put in it comes out bigger, with a new addition; or as a cloth dipped in the dye comes out upon every new dipping in with a deeper dye. And this is done by a new act of creation, put forth by God. Therefore when David, being fallen, prayed for increase of grace, he says, 'Create in me a new heart.' And therefore, Eph. iv. 24, when the Apostle exhorts to further putting on the new man, and speaketh of growth, he adds, 'which is created;' for every new degree is created as well as the first infusion, which shews the difference between natural growth and this. In natural growth there needs not a new creation, but an ordinary concurrence; but it is not so in this: that God that begun the work, by the same power perfects it. And therefore, Eph. i. 19, he prays that the believing Ephesians might see that power that continued to work in them to be no less than that which raised up Christ: for though natural life may with a natural concurrence increase itself, because the *terminus à quo*, the term from whence it springs, is but from a less degree of life to a greater; yet it is otherwise in this life, and our growth in this is from a greater degree of death to a further degree of life. And therefore, Phil. iii. 11, the Apostle calls growing in grace a going on 'to attain the resurrection from the dead.' And therefore the same power that raised up Christ must go along to work it. Hence also every new degree of grace is called a new conversion,—'Except ye be converted,' says Christ to his disciples converted already,—because the same power that wrought to conversion goes still to this. And therefore it is said that 'God gives the increase,' 1 Cor. iii. 7; and it is called 'the increasing of God,' Col. ii. 19; so, Hos. xiv., shewing the ground why they grow so fast, 'Thy fruit is found in me,' says God, ver. 7. Although this is to be added by way of caution and difference, that therein God doth proportion his influence to our endeavours, which in conversion at first he doth not. Therefore we are said to be fellow-workers with him, although it be he that gives the increase, 1 Cor. iii. 6–8; the same you have also Rom. viii., 'We by the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh.' We, as co-workers with the Spirit.

THE VANITY OF THOUGHTS DISCOVERED;

WITH

THEIR DANGER AND CURE.

THE VANITY OF THOUGHTS.

How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?—JER. IV. 14.

IN these words he compares the heart unto some house of common resort, made, as it were, with many and large rooms to entertain and lodge multitudes of guests in; into which, before conversion, all the vain, light, wanton, profane, dissolute thoughts that post up and down the world, as your thoughts do, and run riot all the day, have free, open access, the heart keeps open house to them, gives them willing, cheerful welcome and entertainment; accompanies them, travels over all the world for the daintiest pleasures to feed them with; *lodgeth*, harbours them; and there they, like unruly gallants and roysters, lodge, and revel it day and night, and defile those rooms they lodge in with their loathsome filth and vomits. 'How long,' says the Lord, 'shall they lodge therein,' whilst I, with my Spirit, my Son, and train of graces, 'stand at the door and knock,' Rev. iii. 20, and cannot find admittance? Of all which filthiness, &c., the heart, this house, must be washed: 'Wash thy heart from wickedness.' Washed, not swept only of grosser evils, as, Matt. xii. 43, the house the unclean spirit re-enters into is said to be swept of evils that lay loose and uppermost, but washed and cleansed of those defilements which stick more close, and are incorporated and wrought into the spirit. And those vain and unruly guests must be turned out of doors without any warning; they have stayed there long enough, too long: 'how long?' And 'the time past may suffice,' as the Apostle speaks; they must lodge there no more. The house, the soul, is not in conversion to be pulled down, but only these guests turned out; and though kept out they cannot be, they will still enter whilst we are in these houses of clay, yet lodge they must not. If thoughts of anger and revenge come in in the morning or daytime, they must be turned out ere night: 'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,' Eph. iv. 26; for so you may come to lodge yet a worser guest in your heart with them. 'Give not place to the devil,' for it follows, who will 'bring seven worse with him.' If unclean thoughts offer to come to bed to thee when thou liest down, let them not lodge with thee. To conclude, it is not what thoughts are in your hearts, and pass through them, as what lodging they have, that doth difference your repentance. Many good thoughts and motions may pass as strangers through a bad man's heart; and so likewise multitudes of vain thoughts may make a thoroughfare of a believer's heart, and disturb him in good

duties, by knockings and interruptions, and breakings in upon the heart of a good man; but still they lodge not there—are not fostered, harboured.

My scope in our ordinary course is, to discover the wickedness and vanity of the heart by nature. In the heart, we are yet but in the upper parts of it, the understanding, and the defilements thereof, which are to be washed out of it; and the next defilement which in my broken order I mean to handle is that which is here specified, THE VANITY OF YOUR THOUGHTS. For the discovery's sake of which only, I chose this text as my ground; that is it, therefore, which I chiefly insist upon; a subject which, I confess, would prove of all else the vastest. To make an exact particular discovery of the vanities in our thoughts, to travel over the whole creation, and to take a survey and give an account of all that vanity abounds in all the creatures, was, as you know, the task of the wisest of men, Solomon; the flower of his studies and labours. But the vanity of our thoughts are as multiplied much in us; this little world affords more varieties of vanities than the great. Our thoughts made the 'creatures subject to vanity,' Rom. viii. 20; therefore themselves are subject to vanity much more. In handling of them I will shew you—1. What is meant by thoughts. 2. What by vanity. 3. That our thoughts are vain. 4. Wherein that vanity doth consist, both in the general and some particulars.

1. First, what is meant by *thoughts*, especially as they are the intended subject of this discourse, which in so vast an argument I must necessarily set limits unto.

(1.) By thoughts the Scriptures do comprehend all the internal acts of the mind of man, of what faculty soever; all those reasonings, consultations, purposes, resolutions, intents, ends, desires, and cares of the mind of man, as opposed to our external words and actions. So, Isa. lxvi. 18, all acts are divided into those two, 'I know their works and their thoughts.' What is transacted within the mind is called the thoughts; what thereof do manifest themselves and break out in actions are called works. And so, Gen. vi. 5, 'Every imagination of the thoughts'—*omne figmentum*, all the creatures the mind frames within itself, purposes, desires, &c., (as it is noted in the margin)—'are evil;' where by thoughts are understood all that 'comes within the mind,' (as, Ezek. xi. 5, the phrase is,) and so indeed we vulgarly use it and understand it. So to 'remember' a man is to 'think' of him, Gen. xl. 14; to have purposed a thing, we say, I thought to do it; to take care about a business, is to 'take thought,' 1 Sam. ix. 5. And the reason why all may thus be called the thoughts, is because indeed all affections, desires, purposes, are stirred up by thoughts—bred, fomented, and nourished by them. No one thought passeth, but it stirreth some affection of fear, joy, care, grief, &c. No, although they are thus largely taken here, yet I intend not to handle the vanity of them in so large a sense at present. I must confine myself, as strictly as may be, to the vanity of that which is more properly called the thinking, meditating, considering power of man, which is in his understanding or spirit, that being the subject I have in hand; thoughts not being in this sense opposed only to your works, but unto purposes and intents. So, Heb. iv. 12, as the soul and spirit, so thoughts and intents seem to be opposed. And, Job xx. 2, 3, 'thoughts' are appropriated to the 'spirit of understanding.' And again, yet more strictly, for in the understanding I mean not to speak of, generally, all thoughts therein, neither, as not of the reasonings or deliberations in our actions, but those musings only in the speculative part.

And so I can no otherwise express them to you than thus: Those same

first more simple conceits, apprehensions that arise, those fancies, meditations, which the understanding, by the help of fancy, frames within itself of things; those whereon your minds ponder and pore, and muse upon things; these I mean by thoughts. I mean those talkings of our minds with the things we know, as the Scripture calls it, Prov. vi. 22; those same parleys, interviews, chattings, the mind hath with the things let into it, with the things we fear, with the things we love. For all these things our minds make their companions, and our thoughts hold them discourse, and have a thousand conceits about them; this I mean by thoughts. For besides that reasoning power, deliberating power, whereby we ask ourselves continually, What shall we do? and whereby we reason and discuss things, which is a more inward closet, the cabinet and privy council of the heart, there is a more outward lodging, that presence-chamber, which entertains all comers, which is the thinking, meditating, musing power in man, which suggesteth matter for deliberations, and consultations, and reasonings, which holds the objects till we view them, which entertaineth all that come to speak with any of our affections.

(2.) I add, 'which the mind frames within itself;' so the Scripture expresseth their original to us, and their manner of rising, Prov. vi. 14, 'Frowardness is in his heart,'—*fabricatur*,—'he forgeth mischief,' as a smith doth iron, hammers it out. And the thoughts are the materials of this frowardness in us; upon all the things which are presented to us, the mind begets some thoughts, imaginations on them; and as lusts, so thoughts are conceived, James i. Isa. lix. 4, 'They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity, and hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave spiders' webs.' And, ver. 7, he instanceth in 'thoughts of iniquity,' because our thoughts are spun out of our own hearts, are eggs of our own laying, though the things presented to us be from without.

And this I add to sever them from such thoughts as are injected and cast in only from without, which are children of another's begetting, and often laid out of doors: such as are blasphemous thoughts cast in by Satan, wherein if the soul be merely passive, (as the word 'buffeting' implies, 2 Cor. xii. 7,) they are none of your thoughts, but his; wherein a man is but as one in a room with another, where he hears another swear and curse, but cannot get out from him; such thoughts, if they be only 'from without,' defile not a man. For 'nothing defiles a man but what comes from within,' Matt. xv. 18, 19, or which the heart hath begotten upon it by the devil,—as thoughts of uncleanness, &c.,—wherein, though he be the father, yet the heart is the mother and womb, and therefore accordingly affect the heart, as natural children do. And by that we may distinguish them from the other, namely, when we have a soft heart, an inward love unto them, so that our hearts do kiss the child, then they are our thoughts; or else when the heart broods upon those eggs, then they are our thoughts, though they come from without.

Though this is to be added, that even those thoughts wherein the soul is passive, and which Satan casts in, which we do noways own, wherein he ravisheth the heart, rather than begets them on us, (if there be not any consent to them in us, then it is but a rape, as in law it is,) I yield those thoughts are punishments often of neglect of our thoughts, and of our suffering them to wander; as Dinah, because she went cunningly out, to 'view the daughters of the land,' was taken and ravished; though against her will, yet it was a punishment of her curiosity. Or else they are the punishment of the neglect of good motions of the Spirit; which resisting, we thereby grieve him, and so he deals with us as we with our children, suffers us to be

scared with bugbears, and to be grieved by Satan, that we may learn what it is to neglect him and harbour vanity. Lastly, I add, 'which the mind, in and by itself, or by the help of fancy, thus begets and entertains,' because there are no thoughts or likenesses of things at any time in our fancies, but at the same time they are in the understanding also reflected unto it. As when two looking-glasses are placed opposite and nigh each to other, look, what species appears in the one do also in the other.

2. Secondly, let us see what *vanity* is. Take it in all the acceptations of it, it is true of our thoughts that they are vain.

(1.) It is taken for *unprofitableness*. So, Eccles. i. 2, 3, 'All is vain,' because there is 'no profit in them under the sun.' Such are our thoughts by nature; the wisest of them will not stand us in any stead in time of need, in time of temptation, distress of conscience, day of death or judgment: 1 Cor. ii. 6, 'All the wisdom of the wise comes to nought;' Prov. x. 20, 'The heart of the wicked is little worth,' not a penny for them all. Whereas the thoughts of a godly man are his treasure: 'Out of the good treasure of his heart he brings them forth.' He mints them, and they are laid up as his riches. Ps. cxxxix. 17, 'How precious are they!' He there speaks of our thoughts of God, as the object of them; 'Thy thoughts'—that is, of thee —'are precious.'

(2.) Vanity is taken for *lightness*. 'Lighter than vanity' is a phrase used, Ps. lxii. 9; and whom is it spoken of? Of men; and if anything in them be lighter than other, it is their thoughts, which swim in the uppermost parts, float at the top, are as the scum of the heart. When all the best, and wisest, and deepest, and solidest thoughts in Belshazzar, a prince, were weighed, they were found too light, Dan. v. 27.

(3.) Vanity is put for *folly*. So, Prov. xii. 11, 'vain men' is made all one with men 'void of understanding.' Such are our thoughts. Among other evils which are said to 'come out of the heart,' Mark vii. 22, ἀφροσύνη is reckoned as one, foolishness; that is, thoughts that are such as madmen have, and fools, nothing to the purpose, of which there can be made no use, which a man knows not whence they should come, nor whither they would, without dependence.

(4.) It is put for *inconstancy* and frailty; therefore vanity and a shadow are made synonymous, Ps. cxliv. 4. Such are our thoughts, flitting and perishing, as bubbles: Ps. cxlvi. 4, 'All their thoughts perish.'

(5.) Lastly, they are vain; that is, indeed, *wicked and sinful*. Vanity in the text here is yoked with wickedness; and vain men and sons of Belial are all one, 2 Chron. xiii. 7. And such are our thoughts by nature: Prov. xxiv. 9, 'The thought of foolishness is sin.' And therefore a man is to be humbled for a proud thought, Prov. xxx. 32. For so 'laying hand on the mouth' is taken, as Job xl. 4, for being vile in a man's own eyes.

3. And because this is the sense I chiefly must insist on in handling the vanity of the thoughts, and also men usually think that thoughts are free, I will therefore prove this to you, which is the only doctrine raised, that *thoughts are sins*.

(1.) The *law judgeth* them, Heb. iv. 12; rebukes a man for them, 1 Cor. xiv. 25; and therefore they are transgressions of the law. And so also did Christ rebuke the Pharisees for their 'ill thoughts,' Matt. ix. 4; which argues the excellency of the law, that reacheth thoughts.

(2.) Because they are *capable of pardon*, and must be pardoned, or we cannot be saved, Acts viii. 22; which argues the multitudes of God's compassions, seeing thoughts are so infinite.

(3.) They are *to be repented of;* yea, repentance is expressed as to begin at them: so, Isa. lv. 7, 'Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts.' And a man is never truly and thoroughly wrought on, as 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, till 'every thought be brought into obedience;' which argues that they are naturally rebellious, and contrary to grace. And this also argueth the power of grace, which is able to rule and to subdue so great an army as our thoughts are, and command them all, as one day it will do, when we are perfectly holy.

(4.) They *defile the man;* which nothing defiles but sin: Matt. xv. 18, 19, 'Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts; these defile the man.'

(5.) They are an *abomination to the Lord,* who hates nothing but sin, and whose 'pure eyes can endure to behold no iniquity,' Hab. i. 13. As good meditations are acceptable, Ps. xix. 14, so, by the rule of contrary, bad are abominable.

(6.) They *hinder all good* we should do, and spoil our best performances. Vain thoughts draw the heart away in them, that when a man should draw nigh to God, his heart, by reason of his thoughts, is 'far off from him,' Isa. xxix. 13. A man's heart goes after his covetousness, when he should hear, as the prophet speaks, because his thoughts thus run. Now, nothing else but sin could separate; and what doth estrange us from God is sin, and enmity to him.

(7.) Our thoughts are the *first motioners of all the evil in us.* For they make the motion, and also bring the heart and object together, are panders to our lusts, hold up the object till the heart hath played the adulterer with it, and committed folly: so in speculative uncleanness, and in other lusts, they hold up the images of those gods they create, which the heart falls down and worships; they present credit, riches, beauty, till the heart hath worshipped them, and this when the things themselves are absent.

4. To come now to those particulars wherein this vanity of the thinking, meditating power of the mind consists:—

First, I will discover it in regard of thinking what is good—how unable and loath, &c., it is to good thoughts; and, *secondly,* in regard of the readiness of it to think of evil and vain things.

For the *first,* it is seen, (1.) in a want of ability ordinarily and naturally to raise and extract holy and useful considerations and thoughts from all ordinary occurrences and occasions; which the mind, so far as it is sanctified, is apt unto. A heart sanctified, and in whose affections true grace is enkindled, out of all God's dealings with him, out of the things he sees and hears, out of all the objects are put into the thoughts, he distilleth holy, and sweet, and useful meditations; and it naturally doth it, and ordinarily doth it, so far as it is sanctified. So our Saviour Christ, all speeches of others which he heard, all accidents and occurrences, did still raise and occasion in him heavenly meditations, as we may see throughout the whole Gospels. When he came by a well, he speaks of the 'water of life,' John iv., &c. Many instances might be given. He in his thoughts translated the book of the creatures into the book of grace, and so did Adam's heart in innocency. His philosophy might be truly termed divinity, because he saw God in all; all raised up his heart to thankfulness and praise. So now, in like manner, our minds, so far as they are sanctified, will do. As the philosopher's stone turns all metals into gold, as the bee sucks honey out of every flower, and a good stomach sucks out some sweet and wholesome nourishment out of what it takes unto itself; so doth a holy heart, so far as sanctified, convert and digest all into spiritual useful thoughts. This you may see, Ps. cvii. 43.

That psalm gives many instances of God's providence, and 'wonderful works which he doth for the sons of men;' as deliverances by sea, where men see his wonders; deliverance to captives, &c.: and still the foot of the song is, 'O that men would therefore praise the Lord for the wonderful works he doth for the sons of men.' Now, after all these instances, he concludes, that though others pass over such occurrences with ordinary slight thoughts, yet says he, 'The righteous shall see it, and rejoice,' that is, extract comfortable thoughts out of all, which shall be matter of joy; and 'whoso is wise will observe these things,' that is, makes holy observations out of all these, and out of a principle of wisdom he understands God's goodness in all, and so his heart is raised to thoughts of praise, and thankfulness, and obedience. Now, compare with this the 92d Psalm, made for the Sabbath, when, in imitation of God, who that day viewed his works, we are, on our Lord's day, still to raise holy praiseful thoughts out of them to his glory, which he that penned that psalm then did, ver. 1, 2, and ver. 5, 6, 'How great are thy works!' &c. 'A brutish man knows not, nor will a fool understand this;' that is, he being a beast, and having no sanctified principle of wisdom in him, looks no further than a beast into all the works of God and occurrences of things; looks on all blessings as things provided for man's delight by God; but he extracts seldom holy, spiritual, and useful thoughts out of all, he wants the art of doing it.

If injuries be offered us by others, what do our thoughts distil out of those wrongs, but thoughts of revenge? We meditate how to requite it again. But see how naturally David's mind distils other thoughts of Shimei's cursing, 2 Sam. xvi. 11, 'God hath bidden him,' and it may prove a good sign of God's favour, 'God may requite good for it.' When we see judgments befall others, severe thoughts of censure our minds are apt to raise against our brother, as Job's friends did. But a godly man, whose mind is much sanctified, raiseth other thoughts out of it, Prov. xxi. 29, 'wisely considers,' &c.

So when outward mercies befall us, the next thoughts we are apt to have is to project ease by our wealth, 'Thou hast goods for many years;' and when judgments befall us, we are apt to be filled with thoughts of complaint, and fears, and cares how to wind out again. But what were the first thoughts Job had upon the news of the loss of all? God hath given, and the Lord hath taken, blessed be the Lord for all.

Such thoughts as these, which all opportunities hint unto, a good heart is apprehensive of, and doth naturally raise for its own use. So far barren as our thoughts are, so far vain.

(2.) The vanity and sinfulness of the mind appears in a loathness to entertain holy thoughts, to begin to set itself to think of God, and the things belonging unto our peace; even as loath they are to this as schoolboys are to their books, or to busy their minds about their lessons, their heads being full of play; so loath are our minds to enter into serious considerations, into sad, solemn thoughts of God or death, &c. Men are as loath to think of death as thieves of the execution; or to think of God, as they are of their judge. So to go over their own actions, in a review of them, and read the blurred writing of their hearts, and to 'commune with them,' at night in the end of the day, (as David did, Ps. lxxvii. 6,) men are as loath to do this as schoolboys are to parse their lessons, and the false Latins they have made. Job xxi. 14, 'Depart from us,' say they in Job unto God; from their thoughts they meant it, for it follows, 'we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.' They would not think of him, or know him, by their good wills. And therefore our minds, like a bad stomach, are nauseated with the very scent of

good things, and soon cast them up again: Rom. i. 28, 'They like not to retain the knowledge of God.' Let us go and try to wind up our souls, at any time, to holy meditations, to think of what we have heard, or what we have done, or what is our duty to do, and we shall find our minds, like the pegs of an instrument, slip between our fingers, as we are a-winding them up, and to fall down suddenly again, ere we are aware of it; yea, you shall find, will labour to shun what may occasion such thoughts, even as men go out of the way when they see they must meet with one they are loath to speak withal; yea, men dare not be alone, for fear such thoughts should return upon them. The best shall find a gladness for an excuse by other occasions to knock off their thoughts from what is good; whereas in thinking of vain earthly things, we think the time passeth too fast, clocks strike too soon, hours pass away ere we are aware of it.

(3.) The vanity and sinfulness of the mind appears in the godly, that though they entertain good thoughts, yet the mind is not, will not, be long intent on them. Some things there are which we are and can be intent upon, and accordingly dwell long upon them; and therefore, in Job xvii. 11, the thoughts are called the 'possessions of the heart,'—so it is in the original, and noted in the margin. Such thoughts as are pleasing, the heart dwells on them; yea, so intent are we often, that they hinder our sleep: as it is said of wicked men, 'They cannot sleep for multitude of thoughts,' Eccles. v. 12; so, 'to devise froward things,' Solomon says, Prov. xvi. 30, that 'a man shuts his eyes,' that is, is exceeding attentive, poreth upon his plots; for so a man doth use to do, to shut his eyes when he would be intent, and therefore it is so expressed. But now let the mind be occupied and busied about good things, and things belonging to our peace, how unsteady is it! Which things should yet draw out the intention of the mind; for the more excellent the object is, the stronger our intention should be. God is the most glorious object our minds can fasten on, the most alluring: the thoughts of whom therefore should swallow up all other, as not worthy to be seen the same day with him. But I appeal to all your experiences, if your thoughts of him be not most unsteady, and are, that I may so compare it, as when we look upon a star through an optic glass, held with a palsy-shaking hand. It is long ere we can bring our minds to have ken of him, to place our eyes upon him; and when we have, how do our hands shake, and so lose sight ever and anon! So whilst we are in never so serious talk with him, when all things else should stand without, and not dare to offer entrance till we have done with him, yet how many chinks are there in the heart at which other thoughts come in! and our minds leave God, and follow them, and 'go after our covetousness,' our credit, &c., as the prophet's phrase is, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. So when we are hearing the word, how do our minds ever and anon run out of the church, and come in again, and so do not hear half what is said! So when we are at our callings, which God bids us to be conversant about with all our might, Eccles. ix. 10; yet our minds, like idle truants, or negligent servants, though sent about never so serious a business, yet go out of the way to see any sport, run after the hares that cross the way, follow after butterflies that buzz about us.

And so when we come to pray, Christ bids 'watch to prayer,' Mark xiii. 33; that is, as if we were at every door to place a guard, that none come in and disturb and knock us off. But how oft doth the heart nod, and fall asleep, and run into another world, as men in dreams do! Yea, so natural are distractions to us, when we are busied about holy duties, that as excrements come from men, when very weak and sick, ere they are aware of it,

so do worldly thoughts from us, and we are carried out of that stream a good our mind was running in, into some by-creek, ere we are aware of it.

(4.) The vanity of the mind appears, in regard of good things, that if he doth think of them, yet it doth it unseasonably. It is with your thoughts as with your speeches, their goodness lies in their placing and order, Prov. xxv. 11 : if 'fitly spoken,' they are 'as apples of gold in pictures of silver.' And as a man is to bring forth actions, so thoughts, 'in due season ;' as those fruits, so those buds should come out in season, Ps. i. 3. Now the vanity of the mind appears in thinking of some good things, sometimes unseasonably. When you are praying, you should not only have no worldly thoughts come in, but no other than praying thoughts. But then haply some notions of, or for a sermon will come readily in. So in hearing, a man shall often have good thoughts that are heterogeneal to the thing in hand. So when a man is falling down to prayer, look, what thing a man had forgotten when it should have been thought of, will then come in, or what will affect a man much comes in to divert him. This misplacing of thoughts, suppose they be good, is yet from a vanity of the mind; did those thoughts come at another time, they should be welcome. We find our minds ready to spend thoughts about anything rather than what God at present calls unto. When we go to a sermon, we find we could then spend our thoughts more willingly about reading, or haply searching our hearts; unto which at another time, when called to it, we should be most unwilling to. We could be content to run wild over the fields of meditations and miscellaneous thoughts, though about good, rather than to be tied to that task, and kept in one set path.

In Adam and Christ no thought was misplaced, but though they were as many as the stars, yet they marched in their courses, and kept their ranks. But ours as meteors dance up and down in us. And this disorder is a vanity and sin, be the thought materially never so good. Not every one that hath the best part must therefore first step up the stage to act, but take his right cue. In printing, let the letters be never so fair, yet if not placed in their order, and rightly composed, they mar the sense. Soldiers upon no terms should break their ranks; so nor should our thoughts. Prov. xvi. 3, there is a promise to a righteous man, that, as some read it, 'his thoughts shall be ordered.'

And so much for the first part, the privative sinfulness in our thoughts, in respect of what is good.

Now, *secondly*, I proceed to discover that positive vanity which appeareth in our thoughts in regard of what is evil. And here it is not to be expected, nor indeed can it be performed by any man, to reckon up the several particularities of all those vain thoughts which run through man's heart. I will insist only on some more general discoveries, to which particulars may be reduced for a taste of the rest.

(1.) The vanity of them discovers itself in that which Christ calls, Mark vii. 22, ἀφροσύνη, foolishness,—that is, such thoughts as madmen have, and fools,—which foolishness is seen both in that unsettled wantonness and unstayedness of the mind in thinking, that, like quicksilver, it cannot fix, but as Solomon says, Prov. xvii. 24, 'A fool's eyes are in the ends of the earth,' are garish, and run up and down from one end of the earth to the other, shooting and streaming, as those meteors you see sometimes in the air. And though indeed the mind of man is nimble and able thus to run from one end of the earth to another, which is its strength and excellence, yet God would not have this strength, and nimbleness, and mettle spirit in curvetting and trembling, as I may call it, but in steady directing all our thoughts straight on to his glory, our own salvation, and the good of others; he gave

it this nimbleness to turn away from evil, and the first appearance of it. As we are to walk in God's ways he calls us to, so every thought, as well as every action, is a step, and therefore ought to be steady; 'Make straight steps to your feet,' says the Apostle, Heb. xii. 13, turning not to the right hand nor to the left, until we come to the journey's end of that business we are to think of. But our thoughts at best are as wanton spaniels, who, though indeed they go with and accompany their master, and come to their journey's end with him in the end, yet do run after every bird, and wildly pursue every flock of sheep they see. This unsteadiness ariseth from the like curse on the mind of man as was on Cain, that it being 'driven from the presence of the Lord,' it proves a vagabond, and so 'men's eyes are in the ends of the earth.'

This foolishness, or ἀφροσύνη, is also seen in that independence in our thoughts; they hanging oft together as ropes of sand. This we see more evidently in dreams. And not only then, but when awake also, and that when we would set ourselves to be most serious, how do our thoughts jingle and ring backward! And as wanton boys, when they take pens in their hands, scribble broken words that have no dependence, thus do our thoughts; and if you would but look over the copies thereof which you write continually, you would find as much nonsense in your thoughts as you find in madmen's speeches. This madness and distemper is in the mind since the fall, (though it appears not in our words, because we are wiser,) that if notes were taken of our thoughts, we should find thoughts so vagrant, that we know not how they come in, nor whence they come, nor whither they would. But as God doth all things in weight, number, and measure, so doth his image in us, so far as it is renewed. And by reason of these two, the folly, unsettledness, and independence of our thoughts, we bring our thoughts often to no issue, to no perfection, but wilder away our time in thinking, as you use to say, of nothing. And as Seneca says of men's lives, as of ships that are tossed up and down at sea, it may be said they have been tossed much but sailed nothing; the like in this respect may be said of the thoughts. Or as when men make imperfect dashes, and write nonsense, they are said to scribble, they do not write; so, in these follies and independencies, we wilder and lose ourselves, we do not think. But—

(2.) On the contrary, if any strong lust or violent passion be up, then our thoughts are too fixed and intent, and run in so far into such sinful objects, that they cannot be pulled out again, or any way diverted or taken off: which is another vanity. For our thoughts and our understanding part was ordained to moderate, allay, and cool, and take off our passions, when they are a-playing over, to rule and govern them. But now our thoughts are themselves subjected to our affections, and, like fuel put under them, do but make them boil the more. And although our thoughts do first stir up our fears, joys, desires, &c., yet these being stirred up once, chain, and fix, and hold our thoughts to those objects, so as we cannot loosen them again. Therefore says Christ to his disciples, 'Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?' For perturbations in the affections cause thoughts like fumes and vapours to ascend. Thus if a passion of fear be up, how doth it conjure up multitudes of ghostly thoughts which we cannot conjure down again, nor hide our eyes from, but which haunt us, and follow us up and down wherever we go, so as a man runs away pursued by his own thoughts; 'the heart meditates on terror,' as Isa. xxxiii. 18. So when sorrow is up, how doth it make us study the cross that lights upon us, which to forget would be an ease unto the mind! But a man's passions

make his thoughts to con it, and to say it by heart, over and over again, as if it would not have us forget it. So when love and desire is up, be the thing what it will we are taken with, as preferment, credit, beauty, riches, it sets our thoughts a-work to view the thing all over, from top to toe, as we say, to observe every part and circumstance that doth make it amiable unto us, as if a picture were to be drawn of it. So when joy is up, we view the thing we rejoice in, and read it over and over, as we do a book we like, and we mark every tittle, we are punctual in it; yea, so inordinate are we herein, as often we cannot sleep for thinking on them. Eccles. v. 12, 'Abundance of riches will not suffer him to sleep, for the multitude of thoughts in his head,' speaking of a man who is covetous. How do thoughts trouble the Belshazzars and Nebuchadnezzars of the world! Dan. iv. 19. So, Prov. iv. 16, 'They sleep not unless they have done mischief;' if their desires remain unsatisfied, they do disturb their thoughts, like froward children by their crying. So as often these which men count free, as the most do thoughts, do prove the greatest bondage and torment in the earth unto them, and do hinder sleep, the nurse of nature, eat out and live upon the heart that bred them, weary the spirits, that when a man shall say, (as Job vii. 13,) 'My bed shall comfort me,' by putting a parenthesis to his thoughts and sad discourses which he hath when awake, yet then they haunt a man, and, as ver. 14, 'terrify him.' A man cannot lay them aside as he doth his cloak: and when men die they will follow them to hell, and torment them worse there; your thoughts are one of the greatest executioners there, even 'the worm that dies not.'

(3.) The vanity of the mind appears in curiosity, a longing and itching to be fed with, and to know, and then delighting to think of, things that do not at all concern us. Take an experiment of this in scholars, whose chief work lies in this shop: how many precious thoughts are spent this way! as in curiosity of knowledge, as appears by those the apostle often rebukes, that affect, as 1 Tim. vi. 4, 20, 'oppositions of science falsely so called,' curiosities of knowledge 'of things they have not seen.' So, Col. ii. and 1 Tim. iv. 7, he calls such issues of men's brains they dote on, 'old wives' fables;' because, as fables please old wives, so do these their minds, and of that itch they have in them, even as women with child, in their longings, content not themselves with what the place affords or the season, with what may be had, but often long after some unheard-of rarity, far fetched, or, it may be, not at all to be had. Thus men, not contenting themselves with the wonders of God discovered in the depth of his word and works, they will launch into another sea and world of their own making, and there they sail with pleasure, as many of the school-men did in some of their speculations, spending their precious wits in framing curious webs out of their own bowels.

Take another instance also in others, who have leisure and parts to read much: they should ballast their hearts with the word, and take in those more precious words and wisdom and sound knowledge to profit themselves and others, and to build upon their own souls, and whereby they may be enabled to serve their country; but now what do their curious fancies carry them unto, to be versed in, but play-books, jeering pasquils, romances, feigned stays,* which are the curious needlework of idle brains, so as they load their heads with 'apes and peacocks' feathers,' instead of pearls and precious stones; so as a man may say as Solomon, Prov. xv. 14, 'The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.' Foolish discourses please their ears and eyes to read; all these

* Qu. 'staves'?—ED.

being but purveyors, as it were, for food for the thoughts: like chameleons, men live on air and wind.

To leave them: how do others out of mere curiosity to know and please their thoughts, listen after all the news that flies up and down the world, scum all the froth that floats in foolish men's mouths, and please themselves only with talking, thinking, and hearing of it?

I do not condemn all herein: some their ends are good, and they can make use of it, and do as Nehemiah did, who inquired how things went at Jerusalem, to rejoice with God's people, and mourn with them, and pray for them, and to know how to fashion their prayers accordingly. But I condemn that curious itch that is in them, when it is done but merely to please their fancies; which is much delighted with new things, though they concern us not. Such the Athenians were, Acts xvii. 21. How do some men long all the week till they have events and issues, and make it a great part of the happiness of their lives to study the state more than their own hearts, and affairs of their callings; who take actions of state as their text to study the meaning of, and to preach on wherever they come! I speak of those that yet lay not to heart the miseries of the church of Christ, nor help them with their prayers, if at any time they happen.

The like curiosity is seen in many, in desiring to know the secrets of other men, which yet would do them no good to know, and who do study men's actions and ends, not to reform, or do good to them, but to know them, and think and muse thereof, when alone, with pleasure. This is curiosity, and properly a vanity of the thinking power, which it mainly pleaseth; and is indeed a great sin, when much of men's most pleasing thoughts are spent on things that concern them not. For the things we ought to know, and which do concern us, are enough to take up all our thoughts alone, neither shall we have any to spare: and thoughts are precious things, the immediate fruits and buds of an immortal nature; and God hath given us power to coin them, to lay them out in things that concern our own good, and of our neighbours, and his own glory; and thus not to spend them is the greatest waste in the world. Examine what corn you put in to grind, for God ought to have toll of all. Prov. xxiv. 8, 'He that deviseth evil shall be called a mischievous person,' not always he that doth a mischievous action, but that deviseth it; and, ver. 9, he aggravates it, *à minori*, 'for every thought is sin:' then a combination and conspiracy of wicked thoughts is much more. But—

(4.) There is a worse vanity than this, and that is that intimated, Rom. xiii. 14, 'Taking thought to fulfil the lusts of the flesh,' προνοιαν ποιεῖσθαι, to make projects for it. For thoughts are the caterers for our lusts, and lay in all their provision; they are they that look out where the best markets are, the best opportunities for sinning in any kind, the best bargains for credit, for preferment, for riches, &c. For example, would a man rise? His thoughts study the art of it, men frame their own ladder to climb withal, invent ways how to do it; though often it proves, as to Haman, their own gallows. Would they be rich, what do they study? Even all cheats and tricks on the cards, as I may so speak; that is, all the cunning tricks of the world, all the ways of oppressing, defrauding, and going beyond their brethren, so to pack things in all their dealings, that they themselves should be the winners, and those that deal with them the losers. Isa. xxxii. 7, it is said, that 'the instruments of the churlish are evil, and he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor.' Would a man undermine his opposite, as one that stands in his light, and who hinders his credit? He'll dig and fall a-pioning, with his thoughts, his engines, in the night; dig a pit, as the

Scripture phrase is, and dig deep to hide his counsel, to blow him up in the end, and so as he shall not know who hurt him. And this is worse than all the former, this studied, artificial villany. The more devising there is in sin, the worse; therefore the fact about Uriah, not so much that of Bathsheba, is objected against David, because he used art in it; he 'took thought for it,' but, in the matter of Bathsheba, thoughts took him.

(5.) The fifth is the representing or acting over sins in our thoughts and imaginations, personating those pleasures by imagination which at present we enjoy not really, feigning and imagining ourselves to act those sinful practices we have not opportunity outwardly to perform; speculative wickedness, divines do call it; which to be in the power of imagination to do is evident to you by your dreams, when fancy plays its part most, and, to allude to what the prophet says, makes us believe 'we eat when we are an hungry, and drink when our souls are thirsty,' Isa. xxix. 8. But I mean not to speak of the power and corruption of it, as in our dreams; it were well if, as the Apostle speaks of drunkenness, this speculative wickedness were only 'in the night.' But corrupt and distempered affections do cast men into such dreams in the day, and when they are awake; there are then, to borrow the Apostle's expression, 'filthy dreams,' Jude 8, that 'defile the flesh,' even when awake; when, their lusts wanting work, their fancy erects to them a stage, and they set their imaginations and thoughts a-work to entertain their filthy and impure desires with shows and plays of their own making, and so reason and the intention of their minds sit as spectators all the while to view with pleasure, till their thoughts inwardly act over their own unclean desires, ambitious projects, or whatever else they have a mind unto.

So vain and empty is the heart of man become; so impatient are our desires and lusts of interruption in their pleasures; so sinful and corrupt!

First, Vain and empty it appears to be in this; for take all the pleasures of sin, when they are never so fully, solidly, really, and substantially enjoyed, they are but shadows, a mere outside and figure, as the Apostle calls the world. It is opinion of imagination that casts that varnish of goodness on them which is not truly in them. So Felix* and Bernice's pomp is termed πολυφαντασία. But now this speculative enjoying of them only in imagination, (which many men's hearts take so much pleasure in,) the pleasing ourselves in the bare thoughts and imaginations of them, this is but a shadow of these shadows. That the soul should, Ixion-like, embrace and commit adultery with clouds only, this is a vanity beyond all other vanities, that maketh us vainer than other creatures, who though 'subject to vanity,' yet not to such as this.

Secondly, It argues our desires to be impatient, to be detained from, or interrupted of their pleasures. When the soul shall be found so greedy that when the heart is debarred or sequestered from those things it desires, and wants means or opportunities to act its lusts, as not being to stay, it will at least enjoy them in imagination, and in the interim set fancy to entertain the mind with empty pictures of them drawn in its own thoughts.

Thirdly, Thus they appear also to be exceeding sinful and corrupt. An outward act of sin, it is but as an act of whoredom with the creature when really enjoyed; but this is incest, when we defile our souls and spirits with these imaginations and likenesses which are begotten in our own fancies, being the children of our own hearts.

And yet, my brethren, such speculative enjoying of pleasures, and acting over of sins, the mind of man is full of, as will appear in many particulars.

First, Look what comforts men have at present in their possession and at

* Agrippa.—ED.

command, what excellencies or endowments, men love to be alone to study and think of them; and when they are sequestered from the present use of them, yet they will then be again and again recounting and casting of them up, taking a survey of their happiness in them, applauding their own hearts in their conditions. And as rich men that love money, love to be looking on it, and telling it over; so do men to be summing up their comforts and privileges they enjoy, which others want: as how rich they are, how great, how they excel others in parts and gifts, &c. Oh, how much of that precious sand of our thoughts runs out this way! Thus he in the gospel, he keeps an audit in his heart: 'Soul,' saith he, 'thou hast goods laid up for many years.' So Haman, Esther v. 11, takes an inventory of his honours and goods; he talks of 'all the glory of his riches, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him.' So Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 30, as it may seem, he was alone walking and talking to himself like a fool, saying to himself, 'Is not this the great Babel which I have built by the might of my power, for the glory of my majesty?'

And as thus upon their comforts, so also upon their excellencies, as their learning, wisdom, parts, &c. Men love to stand looking upon these in the glass of their own speculation, as fair faces love to look often and long in looking-glasses: which, as it ariseth from the self-flattery is in men, so also that they might keep their happiness still fresh and continued in their eye; which thoughts, when they raise not up the heart to thankfulness to God, and are not used to that end, but are bellows of pride, they are vain and abominable in the eyes of God, as appears by God's dealing with those before-mentioned; for to the one he says, 'Thou fool, this night;' the other, 'whilst the word was in his mouth,' (giving him no longer warning,) he strikes with madness and brutishness: and Haman, you know, was like a wall that doth swell before it breaks and falls to ruin and decay.

Secondly, This speculative enjoying of pleasures, and acting over sins thus in fancy, doth appear in regard of things to come; which when we have in view, or any hopes of men's thoughts go forth before to meet them, with how much contentment do men's thoughts entertain their desires; with vain promisings and expectations beforehand of their pleasures that are in view, and in possibility to be enjoyed! So they in Isaiah wind up their hearts to a higher pin of jollity in the midst of their cups, in that their hearts thought and promised them, 'To-morrow shall be as to-day, and much more abundant,' chap. lvi. 12. So they, James iv. 13, they say with themselves, 'We will go to such a city, and continue there a year, and get gain.' And the promise of this, and the thoughts of it beforehand, feeds them, and keeps up their heart in comfort. When men rise in a morning, they begin to forethink with much pleasure what carnal pleasures they have the advowson and promise of that day or week; as to go to such company and there be merry, to go such a pleasant journey, enjoy satisfaction in such a lust, hear such news, &c. And thus, as godly men 'live by faith' in God's promises, Hab. ii. 4; Isa. xxxviii. 16, 'By these men live, and this is the spirit of my life,' saith Hezekiah, even 'what God hath spoken,' ver. 15: so do carnal men live much upon the promises of their own hearts and thoughts beforehand, for to this head of vain thoughts these vain promisings are to be reduced, Ps. xlix. 11, 'Their inward thought is, their houses shall continue for ever,' and this thought pleaseth them. What pleasure almost is there, which a man makes much account of, but he acts it first over in private in his own thoughts? And thus do men foolishly take their own words and promises; and so 'befool themselves in the end,' as Jeremiah speaks, chap.

xvii. 11. They take up beforehand in their thoughts, upon trust, the pleasures they are to enjoy, even as spendthrifts do their rents, or heirs their revenues before they come of age to enjoy their lands, that when they come indeed to enjoy the pleasures they expected, either they prove but 'dreamers,' as Isa. xxix. 8, they find their 'souls empty,' or so much under their expectation, and so stale, as they have little in them, that there still proves more in the imagination than in the thing, which ariseth from the vastness and greediness of men's desires, as the cause hereof; for that makes them swallow up all at once. So, Hab. ii. 51, 'Enlarging his desires as hell, he heaps up all nations, swallows them up in his thoughts.' So an ambitious scholar doth all preferments that are in his view.

Thirdly, This speculative wickedness is exercised in like manner towards things past, in recalling, namely, and reviving in our thoughts the pleasure of sinful actions passed; when the mind runs over the passages and circumstances of the same sins, long since committed, with a new and fresh delight; when men raise up their dead actions, long since buried, in the same likeness they were transacted in, and parley with them, as the witch and Saul did with Satan in Samuel's likeness. And whereas they should draw cross lines over them, and blot them out through faith in Christ's blood, they rather copy and write them over again in their thoughts with the same contentment. So an unclean person can study and view over every circumstance passed in such an act, with such a person committed; so a vainglorious scholar doth repeat in his thoughts an eminent performance of his, and all such passages therein as were most elegant. And thus men chew the cud upon any speech of commendation uttered by others of them. And all this even as a good heart doth repeat good things heard or read, with the remembrance also of what quickness they had in such and such passages, and with what affections they were warmed, when they heard them; or as a godly man recalls with comfort the actions of a well-passed life, as Hezekiah did, 'Lord, I have walked before thee with a perfect heart;' and thereby do also stir and provoke their hearts to the like temper again. So, on the contrary, do wicked men use to recall and revive the pleasingest sinful passages in their lives, to suck a new sweetness out of them. Than which nothing argues more hardness or wickedness of heart, or provokes God more. For—

1. It argues much wickedness of heart, and such as, when it is ordinary with the heart to do thus, is not compatible with grace; for in the 6th of the Romans, ver. 21, the Apostle shews that a good heart useth to repeat no such fruit of sinful actions past: 'But what fruit had you of those things whereof ye are now ashamed?' The saints reap and distil nothing out of all those flowers but shame and sorrow, and sad sights: when Ephraim remembered his sin, he was 'ashamed and repented;' and canst thou, in thy thoughts, reap a new harvest and crop of pleasure out of them again and again?

2. It argues much hardness of heart; nothing being more opposite to the truth and practice of repentance, the foundation of which is to call to mind the sin with shame and sorrow, and to recall it with much more grief than ever there was pleasure in the committing of it; and whose property is to 'hate the appearance' of it, and to inflame the heart with zeal and revenge against it. And thereby it provoketh God exceedingly, our hearts are thereby imbrued in a new guilt, we thereby stand to and make good our former act: even so, by remembering it with pleasure, we provoke God to remember it with a new detestation of it, and so to send down new plagues; who, if we recall it with grief, would 'remember it no more.' We shew we take delight to rake in those wounds we have given Christ already. To view the sins of

others with pleasure, Rom. i. 32, is made more than to commit them; but much more to view and revive our own with a fresh delight: and therefore know, that however you may take delight here to repeat to yourselves your old sins, yet that in hell nothing will gall you more than the remembrance of them; every circumstance in every sin will then be as a dagger at thy heart. This was the rich man's task and study in hell, to 'remember the good things he had received,' and his sins committed in the abuse of them. And if godly men here be made to 'possess the sins of their youth' with horror, as Job, and to 'have them ever before them,' as David, how will wicked men be continually affrighted with them in hell?—whose punishment is in a great part set forth to us by Ps. l. 21, 'I will set them in order before thee.'

Fourthly, The fourth thing wherein the speculative vanity appears is in acting sins upon mere imaginary suppositions. Men feign and contrive to themselves, and make a supposition to themselves in their own thoughts, first of what they would be, and then what they would do. Men create fool's paradises to themselves, and then walk up and down in them: as, if they had money enough, what pleasures they would have! if they were in such places of preferment, how they would carry themselves!—to allude to that Absalom said, 2 Sam. xv. 4, 'Oh, if I were a judge in the land, I would do this or that,' &c.,—doing this with a great deal of pleasure, almost as much as those that really enjoy them. This may well be the meaning of Psalm l. 18, where of the hypocrite, who outwardly abstains from gross sins, it is said that 'he consenteth with the thief, and partaketh with the adulterer,' namely, in his heart and fancy, supposing himself with them, and so desires to be doing what they do. Thus take one who is naturally ambitious, whom both nature, parts, and education have all made but 'a bramble, never to rule over the trees,' and hath fixed in a lower sphere, as incapable of rising higher or being greater as the earth is of becoming a star in heaven; yet he will take upon him in his own heart, feigning and supposing himself to be, and then act the part of a great man there, erect a throne, and sit down in it, and thinks with himself what he would do if a king or a great man, &c. So take a man that is unclean, but now grown old, and a dry tree, and so cannot act his lust as formerly, yet his thoughts shall supply what is wanting in his strength or opportunity. And he makes his own heart both bawd, brothel-house, whore, whoremonger, and all. So a man that is naturally voluptuous, loves pleasures, but wants means to purchase them, yet his inclinations will please themselves with the thoughts of what mixture and composition of delights he would have; he will set down with himself his bill of fare, how he would have, if he might wish, his cup of pleasure mingled, what ingredients put into it. So a man that is revengeful, and yet wants a sting, yet he pleaseth himself with revengeful thoughts and wishes, and will be making invectives and railing dialogues against him he hates when he is not by. A man in love, in his fancy he will court his paramour though absent, he will by his imagination make her present, and so frame solemn set speeches to her.

In a word, let men's inclinations and dispositions be of what kind soever, and let the impossibilities and improbabilities be never so great of being what they desire; yet in their fancies and thoughts they will discover themselves what they would be. *Totumque quod esse desiderant sibi apud semetipsos cogitationibus depingunt;* men will be drawing maps of their desires, calculating their own inclinations, cut out a condition of life which fills their hearts, and they please themselves withal. And there is no surer way to know a man's natural inclination than by this.

1. Which yet, first, is as great a folly as any other, imitating children herein; for is it not childish to make clay pies and puppets, (what else are such fancies as these?) and to be as children acting the parts of ladies and mistresses? And yet such childishness is in men's hearts.

2. And, secondly, a vanity also, because a man sets his heart on what is not; the things themselves are not, if a man had them, Prov. xxiii. 5: but to please themselves with suppositions is much worse.

3. Thirdly, this argues the greatest incontentation of mind that may be, when men will in their own thoughts put themselves into another condition than God ever ordained for them.

Use 1.—Having discovered the vanity of your thoughts and your estates thereby, be humbled for them. This I ground upon Prov. xxx. 32, where Agur teacheth us to humble ourselves as well for thoughts as actions: 'If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy mouth.' Now as 'smiting upon the thigh' is put for repentance, and shame, and sorrow in Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 19; so is laying the hand upon the mouth put for greater and deeper humiliation, as arguing full conviction of one's guilt: Rom. iii. 19, 'Every mouth must be stopped.' Having nothing to say, not to plead and excuse that thoughts are free, and it is impossible to be rid of them, &c., but, as Ezek. xvi. 63, 'to remember, and to be confounded, and never to open thy mouth more,'—to be vile, and not to answer again, as Job xl. 4,—this is to lay thy hand on thy mouth; that is, to humble thyself.

And indeed there is much cause; for your thoughts, they are the first-begotten and eldest sons of original sin, and therefore 'the strength' of it, as Jacob called Reuben the first-born; yea, also, and the parents and begetters of all other sins, their brethren; the first plotters and contrivers, and Ahithophels, in all the treasons and rebellions of our hearts and lives; the bellows and incendiaries of all inordinate affections; the panders to all our lusts, that take thought to provide for the satisfying of them; the disturbers in all good duties, that interrupt, and spoil, and fly-blow all our prayers, that they stink in the nostrils of God.

And if their heinousness will nothing move you, consider their number, for they are continually thus; which makes our sins to be in number more than the sands; the thoughts of Solomon's heart were as the sand, and so ours; not a minute but as many thoughts pass from us as in a minute sands do in an hour-glass. So that suppose that, taken severally, they be the smallest and least of your sins, yet their multitude makes them more and heavier than all your other. Nothing smaller than a grain of sand, but if there be a heap of them, there is nothing heavier: Job vi. 3, 'My grief is heavier than the sand.' Suppose they be in themselves but as farthing tokens in comparison of gross defilements, yet because the mint never lies still, sleeping or waking, therefore they make up the greatest part of that treasure of wrath which we are a-laying up: and know, that God will reckon every farthing, and in thy punishment bate thee not one vain thought. And that God looks upon our thoughts thus, see but the indictment he brings in against the old world, which stands still upon record, Gen. vi. When he pronounced that heavy judgment of destroying the old world, doth he allege their murders, adulteries, and gross defilements chiefly as the cause? Their thoughts rather; which, because so many and so continually evil, provoked him more than all their other sins. Go down therefore into thy heart, and consider them well, to humble thee, to make thee vile; and if in one room such a treasure of wickedness be found laid up, what in all those other 'chambers

of the belly,' as Solomon calls them? Consider them to humble thee, but not, for all this their multitude, to discourage thee. For God hath more thoughts of mercy in him than thou hast had of rebellion: Ps. xl. 5, 'Thy thoughts to us-ward' (speaking of thoughts of mercy) 'are more than can be numbered.' Thou begannest but as yesterday to think thoughts of rebellion against him, but his thoughts of mercy have been 'from everlasting,' and reach 'to everlasting:' and therefore, in Isa. lv. 7, having made mention of our thoughts, 'Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts, and he will have mercy on him,' because this objection of the multitude of them might come in to discourage men from hopes of mercy, therefore purposely he adds, 'he will multiply to pardon;' and to assure us that he hath thoughts of mercy to outvie ours of sin, he adds, 'for my thoughts exceed yours, as heaven doth the earth.'

Use 2.—Let us make for ever conscience of them; so Job did, chap. xxxi. 1, 'I made a covenant with mine eyes; why should I think upon a maid?' Solomon gives in especial charge, 'Above all keeping, keep thy heart,' Prov. iv. 23.

First, Thou art to 'keep the Lord's day holy,' 'thyself unspotted of the world;' to 'keep thy brother;' to 'keep all the commandments;' but, above all, to 'keep thy heart,' and in it thy thoughts, for this is the great commandment, because it extends itself, as the foundation, unto them all: for as in the same commandment where murder is forbidden, a malicious thought is also, and so of the rest; so in keeping the thoughts thou virtually keepest all the commandments. As original sin is said to be forbidden in all the commandments, so are the thoughts taken order for in all.

Secondly, 'Out of it are issues of life;' thoughts and affections are the spring, speeches and actions the stream. As are our thoughts, so are our affections, for these are the bellows; so also our prayers, so all, for they are in the soul as the spirits in the body, they run through all, move all, act all.

Thirdly, If you look to God, our thoughts are that spot of ground which he proclaims himself sole Lord of, and makes it one of his greatest titles that he 'knows them, and judgeth them.' Kings attempt to rule your tongues, to bind your hands, and rule your actions; but God only your thoughts. By them we chiefly sanctify him in our hearts, by them we walk with God; and shall we not make conscience of them?

Fourthly, If you look to the work and power of grace, wherein lies it but in 'bringing every thought into obedience?' 2 Cor. x. 5. This is the glory of our religion above all other in the world. Wherein lies the difficulty of it, the strictness of it, what makes it so hard a task, but the observing and keeping the thoughts in bounds? Wherein lies the difference between sincere-hearted Christians and others, but the keeping of our thoughts, without which all religion is but 'bodily exercise?' Papists may mumble over their prayers, hypocrites talk, but this is godliness.

Fifthly, If we look to things we have a care of; if we have a care of speeches because Christ hath said we shall 'answer for every idle word,' why not also, for the same reason, should we have a care of thoughts, which are the words of the mind, only they want a shape to be audible to others, which the tongue gives them; for which you must answer as well as for words, Heb. iv. 12; 1 Cor. iv. 5. If you be careful what companions you have, and whom you lodge in your houses, and who lie in your bosoms, then much more of your thoughts, which lodge in your hearts, which are not yours but God's houses, built for himself, and for Christ and his word to dwell in; seeing also the things you think of have the most near intimate fellowship and

converse with you. And therefore, when you think of the word, it is said to 'talk with you,' Prov. vi. 22. If you be careful of what you eat, because such blood you have, &c., then be careful what you think, thoughts being *pabulum animæ*, as Tully calls them. 'Thy words did I eat,' says Jeremiah, speaking of meditating on it.

Sixthly, If you look to the issue of things; what shall be the subject of that great inquest at the day of judgment? The thoughts and counsels, 1 Cor. iv. 5. And after the day of judgment, men's thoughts shall prove their greatest executioners. What are the cords God lashes you with to all eternity? Your own thoughts; thoughts accusing, whereby you study over every sin; and every one will be as a dagger, Isa. xxxiii. 18. The hypocrite's torment is to 'meditate terrors,' to study God's wrath, and the saints' blessedness, and their own sins and misery.

Remedies against vain thoughts.

The *first* is to get the heart furnished and enriched with good stock of sanctified and heavenly knowledge in spiritual and heavenly truths; for 'a good man,' saith Christ, hath a 'good treasure in his heart,' Matt. xii. 35,—that is, he hath all graces, so many precious truths, which are as gold in the ore, which his thoughts, as the mint, doth coin and beat out, and which words bring forth. 'A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things.' If, therefore, there be not mines of precious truths hid in the heart, no wonder if our thoughts coin nothing but dross, frothy, vain thoughts; for better materials, which should feed the mind, are wanting. Therefore, Solomon saith, 'Wicked men forge,' mint, or hammer, 'wickedness,' Prov. vi. 14; so Junius reads it. Or if men have store of natural knowledge, and want spiritual useful knowledge to themselves; although in company with others they may bring forth good things in speeches, yet when alone, their thoughts run not on them. For this take a place of Scripture, Deut. vi. 6, 7, which shews that laying up the word in the heart, and being much conversant in it, and getting knowledge out of it, is an effectual means to keep our thoughts well exercised when we are alone; for the end why those words of the law are commanded to be 'laid up in the heart,' ver. 5, 6, is, as to teach them to others, so to take up our thoughts when we are most retired and alone, and when a man can do nothing but barely exercise his mind in thinking. For when a man is a-riding, or walking, or lying down, and rising up, (which are often and usually our most retired times for thoughts, and are wholly spent in them, and many ride alone, and lie alone, &c.,) yet then, saith he, thou shalt talk of the word: which command he that is alone cannot do, therefore the talking there meant is not only λόγος προφορικὸς, outward conference with others, (though intended as occasion of talking with others is given,) as to talk to thy bedfellow of it, and to thy companion; but suppose thou hast none, then to talk of it to thyself, for thoughts are λόγοι ἐνδιάθετοι, talking of the mind. And so, comparing Prov. vi. 22 with this place, which will fitly interpret it, it appears; for Solomon, exhorting to the same duty of 'binding the word to the heart,' useth this motive, which is the fruit thereof, 'that when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee,'—that is, by thy thinking of it, it will talk with thee when thou and it art alone,—so as thou shalt not need a better companion, it will be putting in and suggesting something.

Secondly, Endeavour to preserve and keep up lively, holy, and spiritual affections in thy heart, and suffer them not to cool: fall not from thy first love, nor fear, nor joy in God; or if thou hast grown remiss, endeavour to recover those affections again. For such as your affections are, such neces-

sarily must your thoughts be; and they incline the mind to think of such or such objects as will please them, rather than others. Therefore, says David, Ps. cxix. 97, 'How do I love thy law! it is my meditation day and night.' It was his love to it made him think of it so frequently. So, Mal. iii. 16, 'Those that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name,' are joined: for what we fear we often think of, and also speak of often; therefore it is added, 'They spake oft one to another.' Fear made them think much of his name, and thinking of it made them speak of it: such affection, such thoughts, and such speeches as they both are. And, indeed, thoughts and affections are *sibi mutuo causæ*,—the mutual causes of each other: 'Whilst I mused, the fire burned,' Ps. xxxix.; so that thoughts are the bellows that kindle and inflame affections; and then if they are inflamed, they cause thoughts to boil; therefore men newly converted to God, having new and strong affections, can with more pleasure think of God than any.

Thirdly, Of all apprehensions else, get thy heart possessed with deep, strong, and powerful apprehensions and impressions of God's holiness, majesty, omnipresence, and omniscience. If any thoughts be of power to settle, fix, and draw in the mind of man, they are the thoughts of him. What is the reason that the saints and angels in heaven have not a vain thought to eternity, not a wry stroke? His presence fixeth them, their eye is never off him. Take a wanton, garish, loose spirit, let him be but in the presence of a superior whom he fears and reverenceth, and it consolidates him. Job made therefore conscience of his thoughts, that he durst not look awry, chap. xxxi. 1, 2, because God sees it, saith he. This drew in and fastened David's thoughts; Ps. cxxxix. 1–12, he manifests what continual apprehensions he had of God's greatness, majesty, and omnipresence. And what effect had this? 'When I awake I am even before thee,' ver. 17. Look what objects they are have most strong and deep impressions in the mind, of those when a man awaketh he thinks of first. Now such strong impressions had David's thoughts of God, that still when he awaked he was with him. And therefore we find it by experience to be a means to avoid distractions in prayers, to enlarge a man's thoughts in his preparations before, or at the beginning, with a consideration of God's attributes and relations to us: and it will and doth make us serious.

Fourthly, Especially do this when thou awakest, as David did there: 'When I awake, I am still with thee.' To prevent wind, which ariseth from emptiness, men use to take a good draught in the morning, which the stomach feeds; so, to prevent those vain, windy, frothy thoughts the heart naturally engenders, and which arise from emptiness, first fill thy heart with the thoughts of God; go down into his wine-cellar. Observe it when you will, when you first open your eyes there stand many suitors attending on you, to speak with your thoughts, even as clients at lawyers' doors, many vanities and businesses; but speak thou with God first, he will say something to thy heart will settle it for all day: and this do before the crowd of businesses come in upon thee. Of some heathens it is said, that they worship that as their god for all day which they first see in the morning; so it is with the idols of men's hearts.

Fifthly, Have a watchful eye, and observe thy heart all day; though they crowd in, yet observe them, let them know that they pass not unseen. If a man would pray aright, he must watch also who comes in and who goes out. Where strict watch and ward is kept, and magistrates observant, the marshal and constable diligent to examine vagrant persons, you shall have few there; that such swarms of vagrant thoughts make their rendezvous, and pass, is because there is not strict watch kept.

This is in a manner all thou canst do, for they will pass however; but yet complain thou of them, whip them, and give them their pass.

Sixthly, Please not thy fancy too much with vanities and curious sights; this engenders vain thoughts: therefore Job says, chap. xxxi. 1, that he 'made a covenant with his eyes, lest he should think of a maid;' Prov. iv. 25, 'Let thine eyes look right on.'

Seventhly, Be diligent in thy calling; and 'what thine hand finds to do, do it with all thy might,' as it is, Eccles. ix. 10; that is, putting to all the intention and strength of the mind that may be in it. Let all the stream run to ruin about thy mill; the keeping thy thoughts to that channel keeps them from overflowing into vanity and folly. 2 Thess. iii. 11, those that labour not are busybodies; and, 1 Tim. v. 13, idle, wandering, περίεργοι; they are not only called ἀργοί, idle only, because not busy about what they should, but περίεργοι, as intent on things they should not; they go from house to house: so their bodies do, because their minds do wander, having no centre. When David walked alone, what extravagancy did his spirit run into! Let the ground lie fallow, and what weeds will there soon grow in it! God hath appointed us our callings to entertain our thoughts, and to find them work, and to hold them doing in the interims between the duties of his worship, because the spirit and thoughts of men are restless, and will be busied some way. As therefore kings keep those men that have active spirits in continual employment, lest their heads should be working and plotting amiss, so did God appoint even in paradise the active spirit of man a calling to keep him doing. God hereby hedgeth in man's thoughts, and sets them to go in a narrow lane, knowing that if they are unconfined and left at liberty, they would like 'wild asses snuff up the wind,' as Jeremiah speaks, chap. ii. 24. Only take heed of encumbering thy mind with too much business, more than thou canst grasp. It made Martha forget that 'one thing necessary,' being 'cumbered with many things,' Luke x. 4. This breeds cares, μερίμναι, which distract the mind, (so the word signifies, ἀπὸ τοῦ μεριζειν,) as dividing it, and so cause wandering thoughts, nothing more, so that the mind is not itself. For this weakens it, enervates it, and this being vanity,—Exod. xviii. 18, said Jethro to Moses, when encumbered with business, 'Thou wilt fade away as a leaf,' out of which the moisture is dried up,—even that juice which should be left for good duties will be exhausted. As dreams come through multitude of business, Eccles. v. 3, so do a multitude of thoughts from a cumber of business.

Eighthly, In thy calling, and all thy ways, for the success and thy ways therein, 'commit thy ways to God.' Prov. xvi. 3, 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established,' or ordered; that is, keep from that confusion and disorder, and those swarms of cares, which others are annoyed with, and thereby thy aims may be as well accomplished. A few thoughts of faith would save us many thoughts of cares and fears, in the businesses we go about; which prove therefore vain, because they forward not at all the business we intend. When such waves toss the heart and turmoil it, and the winds of passions are up, if a few thoughts of faith come into the heart, they calm all presently.

END OF VOL. III.